POSTHUMOUS PIECES

OF THE LATE

Rev. JOHN WILLIAM de la FLETCHERE.

CONTAINING HIS

Pastoral and Familiar Epistles;

TOGETHER WITH

SIX LETTERS

ON THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST,

COLLECTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE REV. MELVILL HORNE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A LETTER UPON THE PROPHECIES,

Never before published.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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THE Name of the venerable Mr. Fletcher, inscribed on this Volume, will introduce it to the perusal of many, and its own intrinsic worth, will, I flatter myself, entitle it to the approbation of proper judges. Thus I am relieved from the pain of soliciting for it the notice of the public, and of giving it that commendation, which will better become any other person than the Editor. It may, however, be expected, that I should give some account of my Book, and I conform, the more cheerfully, to general custom, as it affords me an opportunity of conciliating the candour of the Reader.

This book is truly Mr. Fletcher's. A large part of the Letters is transcribed from the originals, others from authentic copies, and some from a small collection of letters published a few years ago in Dublin. For the Letters on the Manifestation of Christ, and the Fragments, I am obliged to Mrs. Fletcher: The first are in the Author's own manuscript, the last copied by Mrs. Fletcher from some of his old pocket-books. The Pastoral and Familiar Letters, are written from the period of Mr. Fletcher's conversion, to within a few days of his decease. When the Letters on the Manifestation were written, or to whom they are addressed, I cannot learn; but from the beginning of the first letter, the decayed state of the manuscript, and the extreme smallness of the character, (which could fearcely have been legible to the Author in his latter years,) I judge them to have been the first effay of a genius afterwards fo much admired. The Fragments, of which some appear as the thoughts of the day, others as notes of fermons, bear date the first few years of his ministry.

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If, therefore, any part of this volume, however excellent, be deemed inferior to the more mature productions of the same admirable pen, it is hoped that candour will have at least as much weight as criticism.

The Reader is farther requested, to remember that the pious Author wrote only for himself and his friends; that these sheets want his perfecting hand; and that the Editor thought himself entitled to take no liberties.

It is not expected that Mr. Fletcher's reputation as a writer will receive new lustre from these Posthumous Pieces: But, if the many friends, who revere his memory, find edification and delight in perufing his apostolic Letters; if any, whose oppofition of fentiment would not allow them to converse with him as a polemic divine, shall now receive him to their breasts, as a Christian Brother; if any, who have not reaped the rich harvest of his former writings, are benefited by the gleanings of the field; and if the world in general is made better acquainted with the virtues of this excellent man: all the ends proposed by their publication will be obtained, and the Editor will think himself justified in giving them to the press.

That the benediction of the Almighty may attend these last labours of his Servant, that the Reader may imbibe the spirit of the Author, and that myself and all my Fellow-labourers in the Gospel, my emulate his faith and work in the

Lord, is the earnest defire of

THE EDITOR.

PASTORAL LETTERS.

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Bath, Oct. 30, 1765.

TO those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, in and about Madeley: Peace be multiplied to you from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, through the operations of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

By the help of divine Providence, and the affiftance of your prayers, I came fafe here. I was, and am still, a good deal weighed down under the fense of my own insufficiency to preach the unfearchable riches of Christ, to poor, dying souls.

This place is the feat of fatan's gaudy throne. The Lord hath, nevertheless, a few names here, who are not ashamed of him, and of whom he is not ashamed; both among the poor, and among the rich. There are not many of the last, though bleffed be God for any one: It is a great miracle if one camel passes through the eye of a needle; or, in other words, if one rich person enters into the kingdom of heaven. I thank God, none of you are rich in the things of this world. You are freed from a double fnare, even from Dives's portion in this life. May you know the happiness attending your state. It is a mercy to be driven to the throne of grace, even by bodily want; and to live in dependance on divine mercy for a morfel of bread.

I have been fowing the feed the Lord hath given me, both in Bath and Bristol; and I hope your prayers have not been lost upon me, as a minister; for though I have not been enabled to discharge my office, as I would, the Lord hath yet, in some measure, stood by me, and over-ruled my soolishness and helplessness. I am much supported by the thought that you bear me on your hearts, and when you come to the throne of grace to ask a

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bleffing

belffing for me, in the name of Jesus, the Lord

doth in no wife cast you out.

In regard of the state of my soul, I find, blessed be God, that as my day is, so is my strength to travel on, either through good or bad report. My absence from you answers two good ends to me: I feel more my insufficiency, and the need of being daily ordained by Christ to preach his gospel; and I shall value the more my privileges among you, please God I return safely to you. I had yesterday a most advantageous offer made me of going, free cost, to visit my mother, brothers, and sisters in the sless, whom I have not seen for eighteen years; but I find my relations in the spirit are nearer and dearer to me, than my relations in the fless. I have, therefore, rejected the kind offer, that I may return among you, and be comforted by the mutual

faith both of you and me.

I hope, dear brethren, you improve much under the ministry of that faithful servant of God, Mr. Brown, whom Providence bleffes you with. Make hafte to gather the honey of knowledge and grace as it drops from his lips; and may I find the hive of your hearts fo full of it, on my return, that I may share with you in the heavenly store. In order to this, befeech the Lord to excite your hunger and thirst for Jesus's flesh and blood, and to increase your desire of the fincere milk of the word. When people are hungry, they will find time for their meals; and a good appetite does not think a meal a day too much. As you go to your spiritual meals, do not forget to pray all the way, and to feast your fouls in hopes of hearing some good news from heaven, and from Jesus, the faithful, loving friend, whom you have there: And when you return, be fure to carry the unfearchable riches of Jesus's dying and rifing love, home to your houses, in the vessel of a believing heart. Let

Let your light be attended with the warmth of love. Be not fatisfied to know the way to heaven, but walk in it immediately, constantly, and joyfully. Be all truly in earnest. You may, indeed, impose upon your brethren, by a formal attendance on the means of grace, but you cannot deceive the Searcher of hearts. Let him always fee your hearts struggling towards him; and if you fall thro' heaviness, sloth, or unbelief, do not make a bad matter worse, by continuing helpless in the ditch of fin and guilt. Up, and away to the fountain of Jesus's blood. It will not only wash away the guilt of past fins, but strengthen you to tread all iniquity under your feet for the time to come. Never forget, that the foul of the diligent shall be made fat; and that the Lord will spue the lukewarm out of his mouth, unless he gets that love which makes him fervent in spirit, diligent in business, serving the Lord.

You know the way to get this love is, to confider the free mercy of God, and to believe in the pardoning love of Jesus, who died the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. 2. To be frequently if not constantly, applying this faith, with all the attention of your mind, and all the fervour of your heart,-" Lord, I am loft, but Christ hath died." 3. To try actually to love, as you can, by fetting your affections on Christ, whom you fee not; and for his fake, on your brethren, whom you do fee. 4. To use much private prayer for yourselves and others; and to try to keep up that communion with God, and your absent brethren. I beg in order to this, that you will not forfake the affembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is: And when you meet as a Society, be neither backward, nor forward to speak. Esteem yourselves, every one as the meanest in the company: and be glad to fit at the feet of the lowest. If you are tempted against any one, yield not to the temptation; and pray much for that love which hopes all things, and A 5

the best construction even upon the worst of failings. I beg, for Christ's sake, I may find no divisions, nor offences among you, on my return. "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, sulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves."

I earnestly request the continuance of your prayers for me, both as a minister, and as your companion in tribulation. Ask particularly, that the Lord would keep me from hurting his cause in these parts: And that when Providence shall bring me back among you, I may be more thoroughly surnished for every good work. Pardon me, If I do not salute you all by name: My heart does it, if my pen does not. That the blessing of God, in Jesus Christ, may crown all your hearts, and all your meetings, is the earnest prayer of, my very dear Brethren, Yours, &c. J. F.

Oakhall, Sept. 23, 1766.

TO those who love or fear the Lord Jesus Christ at Madeley: Grace, peace, and love be multiplied to you from our God and Saviour

Jesus Christ.

me fo suddenly from you, that I had not time to take my leave, and recommend myself to your prayers. But I hope the good Spirit of our God, which is the Spirit of love and supplication, has brought me to your remembrance, as the poorest and weakest of Christ's ministers, and consequently, as one whose hands stand most in need of being strengthened and listed up by your prayers. Pray on, then, for yourselves, for one another, and for him whose glory is to minister to you in holy

holy things, and whose forrow it is not do it, in a manner more suitable to the majesty of the gos-

pel, and more profitable to your touls.

My heart is with you: nevertheless, I bear patiently this bodily separation for three reasons. First, the variety of more faithful and able minifters whom you have, during my absence, is more likely to be ferviceable to you, than my prefence among you: And I would always prefer your profit to my fatisfaction. Secondly, I hope Providence will give me those opportunities of converfing and praying with a greater variety of experienced Christians, which will tend to my own improvement, and I trust, in the end, to yours. Thirdly, I flatter myfelf, that after some weeks absence, my ministry will be recommended by the advantage of novelty, which (the more the pity) goes farther with fome, than the Word itself. the mean time, I shall give you some advice, which, it may be, will prove both fuitable and profitable to you.

r. Endeavour to improve daily under the ministry which Providence blesses you with. Be careful to attend it with diligence, saith and prayer. Would it not be a great shame, if, when ministers come thirty or forty miles to offer you peace and pardon, strength and comfort, in the name of God, any of you should slight the glorious message, or hear it, as if it was nothing to you, and as if you heard it not? See, then, that you never come from a sermon, without being more deeply con-

vinced of fin and righteoufnefs.

2. Use more prayer before you go to church. Confider that your next appearance there may be in a coffin; and entreat the Lord to give you now, so to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that you may be filled. Hungry people never go fasting from a feast. Call to mind the text I preacted from, the last Sunday but one before I lest you.

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"Wherefore laying aside all malice," &c. 1 Pet. ii. 1.

3. When you are under the word, beware of fitting as judges, and not as criminals. Many judge of the manner, matter, voice, and person of the preacher. You, perhaps, judge all the congregation, when you should judge yourselves worthy of eternal death; and yet, worthy of eternal life, through the worthiness of Him, who stood and was condemned at Pilate's bar for you. The moment you have done crying to God, as guilty, or thanking Christ, as reprieved criminals, you have reason to conclude that this advice is levelled at you.

4. When you have used a means of grace, and do not find yourselves sensibly quickened, let it be a matter of deep humiliation to you. For want of repenting of their unbelief and hardness of heart, some get into a habit of deadness and indolence; so that they come to be as insensible, and as little

ashamed of themselves for it, as stones.

5. Beware of the inconsistent behaviour of those. who complain they are full of wanderings, in the evening, under the word, when they have fuffered their minds to wander from Christ all the day long. O! get acquainted with him, that you may walk in him, and with him. Whatsoever you do or say, especially in the things of God, do, or say it, as if Christ was before, behind, and on every side of you. Indeed, he is fo, whether you confider it or not; for if when he visibly appeared on earth, he called himself "the Son of man who is in heaven," how much more, then, is he present on earth now, that he makes his immediate appearance in heaven? Make your conscience maintain a sense of his bleffed presence all the day long, and then, all the day long, you will have a continual feaft; for can you conceive any thing more delightful, than to be always at the fountain of love, beauty, and joy; -at the spring of power, wisdom, goodneis.

nefs, and truth? Can there be a purer and more melting happiness, than to be with the best of fathers, the kindest of brothers, the most generous of tenefactors, and the tenderest of husbands? Now Jesus is all this, and much more, to the believing soul. O! believe, my friends, in Jesus now, through a continual now; and, until you can thus believe, mourn over your unbelieving hearts; drag them to him, as you can; think of the efficacy of his blood shed for the ungodly, and wait for the Spirit of faith from on high.

6. Some of you wonder, why you cannot believe; why you cannot fee Jesus with the eye of your mind, and delight in him with all the affections of your heart. I apprehend the reason to be one of

these, or, perhaps, all of them:

First, You are not poor, lost, undone, helpless finners in yourselves. You indulge spiritual and refined self-righteousness; you are not yet dead to the law, and quite slain by the commandment. Now the kingdom of heaven belongs to none but the poor in spirit. Jesus came to save none but the lost. What wonder, then, if Jesus is nothing to you, and if you do not live in his kingdom of peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost?

Secondly, perhaps, you spend your time in curious reasonings, instead of casting yourselves, as forlorn sinners, at Christ's feet; leaving it to him to bless you, when, and in the manner, and degree, he pleases. Know, that he is the wise and sovereign God, and that it is your duty to lie before him as

clay, -as fools, -as finful nothings.

Thirdly, perhaps, some of you wilfully keep idols of one kind or other; you indulge some sin against light and knowledge, and it is neither matter of humiliation, nor confession to you. The love of praise, of the world, of money, and of sensual gratifications, when not lamented, are as implacable enemies to Christ, as Judas and Herod. "How

"How can you believe, sceing you seek the honour that cometh of men?" Hew, then, your Agags in pieces before the Lord; run from your Delilahs to Jesus; cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye that offends you. "Come out from among them, and be separate, faith the Lord, and I will receive you." Nevertheless, when you strive, dare not to make yourself a righteousness of your strivings. Remember that meritorious, justifying righteousness is finished and brought in, and that your works can no more add to it, than your sins can diminish from it. Shout, then, "the Lord our Righteousness;" and, if you feel yourselves undone sinners, humbly, yet boldly say, "In the Lord I have righteousness and strength."

When I was in London, I endeavoured to make the most of my time; that is to fay, to hear, receive, and practife the word. Accordingly, I went to Mr. Whitfield's tabernacle, and heard him give his Society a most excellent exhortation upon love. He began by observing, "that when the apostle St. " John was old, and past walking and preaching, " he would not forfake the affembling himfelf " with the brethren, as the manner of too many " is, upon little or no pretence at all. On the " contrary, he got himself carried to their meeting, " and with his last thread of voice, preached to "them his final fermon, confifting of this one " fentence, My little children, love one another." I wish, I pray, I earnestly beseech you, to follow that evangelical, apostolical advice; and, till God makes you all little children, little in your own eyes, and fimple as little children, give me leave to fay, my dear brethren, love one another; and of course, judge not, provoke not, and be not shy one of another; but bear ye one another's burdens, and fo fulfil the law of Christ. Yea, bear with one another's infirmities, and do not eafily cast off any one; no, not for fin, except it is obstinately persisted in.

My sheet is full, and so is my heart, of good wishes for you, and ardent longings after you all. When I return, let me have the comfort of finding you all believing and loving. Farewell, my dear brethren. The bleffing of God be with you all! This is the earnest desire of your unworthy minister,

J. F.

To Mrs. MARY CARTWRIGHT.

My dear Friend, Madeley, ---, 1775.

S it may be long lefore you have an opportunity to hear a fermon, I find myfelf drawn by friendship and pastoral care, to send you a few

lines to meditate upon to-morrow.

As I was longing for an opportunity to offer life, friends, and liberty to Him, who is worth a thou-fand fuch alls, I thought, I must wait for no other opportunity, and found another blessing, in using the present moment. I did not forget to offer you among my friends, and I found it on my mind to pray and praise with you; and to beseech you to fulfil my joy, by giving me to see you all glorious within, and full of eager defire to be with our everlasting Friend. O let us take a thousand times more notice of him, till the thought of him engrosses all other thoughts, the defire of him all other defires.

Nothing can reconcile me to let my friends go, but the fullest evidence that they are going to Jesus. If you go before me, let me not want that comfort. Let me never see you, but full of an earnest desire to do and suffer the will of our God. I wanted to see heavenly joy and glory beaming from your eyes last night, and, I feared, I saw them not. Pardon my fears, if they have no foundation. Charity thinks no evil, hopes all, and yet is jealous with a godly jealousy; and the warmer the charity, the stronger and keener the jealousy. A doubt passed thro' my mind, whether you had not caught our duiness,

dulness, whether your foul is as near to God, as it was some weeks ago. O! if the multiplied mercies of God toward us, do not rouse us to the

third heaven of gratitude, what will?

My prayer, my ardent prayer to God, and I make it now afresh, with tears of desire, is that you may live as one, who does not depend on another breath. Come, my dear friend, up with your heart, and spread the arms of your faith. Welcome Jesus. Believe till you are drawn above yourself and earth; - till your flaming foul mounts, and loses itself in the Sun of Rightcousness. I want you to be a burning, shining light, setting fire to all the thatch of the Devil, and kindling every fmoking flax around you. Disappoint not the Saviour's hope, and mine. I expect to fee you not only a risen Lazarus, and a spared Hezekiah, but a Mary at Jesus's feet, a Deborah in the work of the Lord. There is what St. Paul calls, a being befide ourfelves, which becomes you fo much the better, as you are restored to us against hope; -and for how long, we know not.

Fulfil my joy, I fay, which must droop till I can rejoice over you living, dying, or dead, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Give yourself much to believing, thankful, folemn prayer. was condemned for not making more of the folemn opportunity I had with you last Thursday. O! if we are spared to meet again, let us pray until we wind our hearts into ardent praise, and then, let us praise till we are caught up into heaven. up our hands to-morrow, and if we meet on Monday, be it in the name of Christ, to pour the oil of joy into each other's hearts, by confessing him more heartily our God, our life, our present and never dying friend Farewell in him every Yours, &c. J. F. way.

To Mr. MICHAEL ONIONS.

My dear Prother, Bristol, July 11, 1776. HAVING just seen, at the Wells, Mr. Darby, who is going back to the Dale, I gladly seize the opportunity of letting you know what the Lord does for my foul and body. With respect to my better part, I feel a degree of righteousness, peace, and joy; and wait for the establishment of his internal kingdom in the Holy Spirit. The hopes of my being rooted and grounded in the love that casts out every degree of flavish fear, grow more lively every day. I thank God, I am not afraid of any evil tidings; my heart stands calm, believing in the Lord, and defiring him to do with me whatscever he pleases. With respect to my body, I know not what to fay; but the physician fays, " he hopes I shall do well:" And so I hope and believe too, whether I recover my strength or not. Health and fickness, life and death, are best when the Lord fends them; and all things work together for good to those that love God

I am forbid preaching; but, bleffed be God, I am not forbid by my heavenly Physician, to pray, believe, and love. This is a sweet work, which heals, delights, and strengthens. Let us do it till we recover our spiritual strength; and then, whether we shall be seen on earth or not, will matter nothing. I hope you bear me on your hearts, as I do you on mine. My wish for you is, that you may be real possessor of an inward kingdom of grace: that you may so hunger and thirst after righteousness as to be silled: and that you may so call on your heavenly Father in secret, that he may reward you openly with abundance of grace, which may evidence to all, that he honours you, because

you honour him.

O! be hearty in the cause of religion. I would have you either hot or cold; for it is a fearful thing

to be in danger of falling into the hands of the living God, and sharing the fate of the lukewarm. Be humbly zealous for your own falvation, and for God's glory; nor forget to care for the falvation of each other. The case of wicked Cain is very common, and the practice of many fays, with that wretch, "Am I my brother's keeper?" O! pray God to keep you by his mighty power, thro' faith, to falvation. Keep yourselves in the love of God, if you are there; and keep one another by exa ple, reproof, exhortation, encouragement, focial prayer, and a faithful use of all the means of grace. Use yourselves to bow at Christ's feet. As your Prophet, go to him continually for the holy anointing of his Spirit, who will be a teacher always near, always with you, and in you. If you have that inward Instructor, you will suffer no material loss, when your outward teachers are removed. Make the most of dear Mr. Greaves while you have him. While you have the light of God's word, believe in the light, that you may be the children of the light, fitted for the kingdom of eternal light; where I charge you to meet, with joy, your affectionate brother and minister,

Bristol, Oct. -, 1776.

Madeley: Grace and peace, power and love, joy and triumph in Christ, be multiplied to you, thro' the blood of the Lamb, thro' the Word that testifies of the blood, and thro' the Spirit who makes

the application.

I expected I should have been with you to see your love, and be edified by your conversation, but Providence has hindered. Twice I had fixed the day of my departure from this place; and twice, the night before that day, I was taken worse than usual, which, together with the unanimous sorbiddings of my spiritual, temporal, and medical friends here,

here, made me put off my journey. The argument to which I have yielded is this, "There is yet fome little probability, that if you stay here you might recover strength to do a little ministerial work; but if you go now, you will ruin all." However, God is my witness, that, if I have not ventured my life to come and fee you, it was not from a defire to indulge myfelf, but to wait and fee if the Lord would restore me a little strength, and add a few years to my life, that I might employ both in your fervice; just as a horse is sometimes kept from his owner, and confined to the yard of a farrier, until he recovers the ability of doing his master some service. I only defire to know, do, and fuffer the will of God concerning me; and I affure you, my dear brethren, if I faw it to be his will, that I should give up the means of health I have here, I would not tarry another day, but take my chance, and come to my dear charge, were the parish situated ten times more North than it is.

I do not, however, despair of praising God with you in the body; but let us not stay for this to praise him. Let us bless him now; and if any of you are under a cloud of unbelief, and see no matter of praise in being out of hell, in being redeemed by Christ, crowned with thousands of spiritual and temporal mercies, and called to take possession of a kingdom of glory; I beg you would praise him on my account, who raises me so many friends in time, who afflicts me with so gentle a hand, who keeps me from all impatience, and often fills me with consolation in my trouble; giving me a sweet hope that all things work, and shall work together

for good.

Love one another. The love you shew one to another will greatly refresh my heart. Keep united to our common head, Jesus. Pray for your infirm minister as he does for you; and let me hear of your growth in grace, which will be health to the withering bones of your unprofitable servant, J. F.

P.S. Medicine does not feem to relieve me; but I rejoice that when outward remedies fail, there is one, the blood, and word, and Spirit of Jesus, which never fails;—which removes all spiritual maladies, and will surely give us eternal life. Let me recommend that remedy to you all: You all want it, and, blessed be God, I can say, Probatum est—tried.

TO THE PARISHIONERS OF MADELEY.

Newington, Dec. 28th, 1776.

My dear Parishioners,

Hoped to have spent the Christmas holidays with you, and to have ministered to you in holy things; but the weakness of my body confining me here, I humbly submit to the divine dispensation, and ease the trouble of my absence, by being present with you in spirit, and by reflecting on the pleasure I have felt, in years past, while singing with you, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a fon is given," &c. This truth is as true now as it was then, and as worthy to be thankfully received at Newington as at Madeley. Let us then, receive it with all readiness, and it will unite us: We shall meet in Christ, the centre of lasting union, the source of true life, the spring of pure righteousness and joy; and our hearts shall be full of the fong of angels, "Glory be to God on high! Peace on earth! Good-will toward each other, and all mankind!"

In order to this, may the eye of your understanding be more and more opened to see your need of a Redeemer; and to behold the suitableness, freeness, and sulness of the redemption, which was wrought out by the Son of God, and which is applied by the Spirit, thro' faith. The wish which glows in my soul is so ardent and powerful, that it brings me down on my knees, while I write, and,

in that supplicating posture, I entreat you all, to confider and improve the day of your visitation, and to prepare in good earnest, to meet, with joy, your God, and your unworthy pastor, in another world. Weak as I was when I left Madeley, I hear that feveral, who were then young, healthy, and strong, have got the flart of me; and that some have been hurried into eternity, without being indulged with a moment's warning. May the awful accident strike a deeper confideration into all our fouls! May the found of their bodies, dashed to pieces at the bottom of a pit, rouse us to a speedy conversion, that we may never fall into the bottomless pit, and that iniquity and delays may not be our eternal ruin! Tottering as I fland on the brink of the grave, some of you, who seem far from it, may drop into it before me; for what has happened,

may happen again.

Let us, then, all awake out of sleep; and let us all prepare for our approaching change, and give ourselves no rest, till we have got gospel ground to hope, that our great change will be a happy one. In order to this, I befeech you, by all the ministerial and providential calls you have had for these seventeen years, harden not your hearts. Let the long fuffering of God towards us, who furvive the hundreds I have buried, lead us all to repentance. Dismiss your fins, and embrace Jesus Christ, who wept for you in the manger, bled for you in Gethsemane, hanged for you on the cross, and now pleads for you on his mediatorial throne. By all that is near and dear to you, as men and as Chriftians, meet me not on the great day, in your fins and in your blood, enemies to Christ by unbelief, and to God by wicked works. Meet me in the garment of repentance, in the robe of Christ's merits, and in the white linen, (the purity of heart and life) which is the holiness of the godly: -that "holiness, without which no man fhall fee God." Let the time

time past suffice, in which some of you have lived in sin. By repentance put off the old man, and his works; by faith put on the Lord Jesus and his righteousness. Let all wickedness be gone,—for ever gone, with the old year; and with the new one begin a new life,—a life of renewed devotion to God, and of increasing love to our neighbour.

The fum of all I have preached to you is contained in four propositions. First, heartily repent of your fins, original and actual. Secondly, believe the gospel of Christ in fincerity and truth. Third-ly, in the power which true faith gives, (for all things commanded are possible to him that believeth) run with humble faith the way of God's commandments before God and men. Fourthly, by continuing to take up your crofs, and to receive the pure milk of God's word, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. So shall you grow in peace and joy all the days of your life; and when rolling years shall be lost in eternity, you will for ever grow in blifs and heavenly glory. O what blifs! What glory! The Lord shall be our fun-and our crown; and we shall be jewels in each others crown, I in yours, and you in mine. For ever we shall be with the Lord, and with one another. We shall all live in God's heavenly church, the heaven of heavens. All our days will be a fabbath, and our fabbath eternity. No bar of business, nor sickness, no distance of time nor place, no gulph of death and the grave, shall part us more. We shall meet in the bosom of Abraham, who met Christ in the bosom of divine love. O what a meeting! And shall some of us meet there this very year, which we are just entering upon? What a year! Oh that bleffed year! if we are of the number of these who die in the Lord, our souls shall burst the womb of this corruptible flesh; we shall be born into the other world; we shall behold the fun of righteousness without a cloud, and for

ever bask in the beams of his glory. Is not this prospect glorious enough to make us bid defiance to fin and the grave; and to join the cry of the Spirit and the Bride, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," though it should be in the black chariot of death?

Should God bid me to flay on earth a little longer, to ferve you in the gospel of his Son; should he renew my strength, (for no word is impossible with him) to do among you the work of a pastor, I hope I shall, by God's grace, prove a more humble, zealous, and diligent minister, than I have hitherto Some of you have supposed that I made more ado about eternity and your precious fouls than they were worth; but how great was your mistake! Alas! it is my grief and shame that I have not been, both in public and private, a thoufand times more earnest and importunate with you about your spiritual concerns. Pardon me, my dear friends, pardon me my ignorances and negligences in this respect. And as I most humbly ask your forgiveness, so I most heartily forgive any of you, who may, at any time, have made no account of my little labours. I only entreat fuch now to evidence a better mind, by paying a double attention to the loud warnings of Providence, and to the pathetic discourses of the faithful minister, who now supplies my place. And may God, for Christ's fake, forgive us all, as we forgive one another!

The more nearly I confider death and the grave, judgment and eternity, the more, bleffed be God, I feel that I have preached to you the truth, and that the truth is folid as the rock of ages. Glory be to his divine grace, I can fay in some degree, "bere is firm footing." Follow me, and the forrows of death, instead of encompassing you around, will keep at an awful distance; and, with David, we shall follow our great Shepherd, even through the dreary valley, without fearing or feeling any evil.

Altho'

Altho' I hope to see much more of the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living than I do fee; yet, bleffed be the divine mercy, I fee enough to keep my mind at all times unruffled; and to make me willing, calmly to refign my foul into the hands of my faithful Creator, my loving Redeemer, and my fanctifying Comforter, this moment, or the next, if he calls for it. I defire your public thanks, for all the favours he sheweth me continually, with respect to both my foul and body. Help me to be thankful; for it is a pleafant thing to be thankful. May our thankfulness crown the new year, as God's Patience and Goodness have crowned all our life. Permit me to bespeak an interest in your prayers also. Ask that my faith may be willing to receive all that God's grace is willing to bestow. Ask that I may meekly suffer, and zealously do all the will of God, in my present circumstances; and that living or dying, I may fay, with the witness of God's Spirit, " For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

If God calls me foon from earth, I beg he may, in his good providence, appoint a more faithful shepherd over you. You need not fear that he will not: You see, that for these many months, you have not only had no famine of the word, but the richest plenty; and what God has done for months, he can do for years; yea, for all the years of your life. Only pray; "ask, and you shall receive." Meet at the throne of grace, and you shall meet at the throne of glory, your affectionate, obliged, and unworthy minister,

To Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

Newington, Jan. 13th, 1777.

My dear Brother,

I Am two kind letters in your debt. I would have answered them before, but venturing to ride out in the frost, the air was too sharp for my weak

weak lungs,, and opened my wound, which has

thrown me back again.

I am glad to see by your last, that you take up your shield again. You will never prove a gainer by vilely casting it away. Voluntary humility, despondency, or even a deseat, should not make you give up your confidence: but rather make you hug your shield, and embrace your Saviour with redoubled ardour and courage. To whom should you go, but to him, "who hath the words of everlasting life;" and if you give up your faith, do you not block up the way, by which you should return to him? Let it be the last time you compliment the enemy with what you should fight for

to the last drop of your blood.

You must not be above being employed in a little way. The great Mr. Grimshaw was not above walking some miles, to preach to seven or eight people; and what are we compared to him? Our neighbourhood will want you more when Mr. Greaves and I are gone. In the mean time, grow in meek, humble, patient, refigned love: And your temper, person, and labours will be more acceptable to all around you. I have many things to fay to you about your foul; but you will find the substance of them in two sermons of Mr. Wesley's, the one entitled, "The Devices of fatan," and the other, "The Repentance of Believers." I wish you would read one of them every day, till you have reaped all the benefit that can be got from them: Nor eat your morfel alone, but let all be benefited by the contents. I'am, &c.

J.F.

Newington, Feb. 18th, 1777. To Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

My dear Brother,

Y dear friend Mr. Ireland brought me, last week, Sir John Elliot, who is esteemed the greatest physician in London, in consumptive cases. He gave hopes of my recovery upon using proper diet and means. I was bled yesterday for the third time; and my old doctor thinks, by gentle evacuations and spring herbs, to mend my juices. Be that as it may, I calmly leave all to God; and use the means without trusting in them. I am perfectly taken care of by my kind friends, whom I recommend to your prayers, as well as myself.

With respect to my soul, I calmly wait, in unshaken resolution, for the full salvation of my God; ready to trust him and to venture on his faithful love, and on the sure mercies of David, either at midnight, noonday, or cock-crowing: for my times are in his hand, and his time is best, and is my time. Death has lost its sting; and, I thank God, I know not what hurry of spirit is, or unbelieving fears, under my most terrifying symptoms. Glory be to God in Christ, for this unspeakable mercy!

Help me to praise him for it.

You talk of my "last trials." I can hardly guess what you mean, unless Mr. —— should have mistaken tears of holy shame before God, and of humble love to my opponents, for great trials; but they only indicated such a trial, as I pray God to make me live and die in.—I mean, a deep sense of my unworthiness, and of what I have so often prayed for, in these words,—

"I would be by myfelf abhorr'd, All glory be to Christ my Lord."

I thank you, however, for the comfort you administer to me upon, I suppose, Mr. _____'s mistake.

With

With respect to our intended room, I beg Mr. Palmer, Mr. Lloyd, and yourself to consult about it, and that Mr. Palmer wou'd contract for the whole. For my own part, I shall contribute 1001. including 101. I have had for it from Mr. Ireland, and 101. from Mr. Thornton. Give my kindest love to all friends and neighbours. I would mention all their dear names, but am strictly forbidden a longer epistle. Farewell in Jesus. Yours, J. F.

P. S. If the room cannot be completed for what I have mentioned, and 201. more be wanting, ask Mr. Lloyd how much the royalty might come to, and tell him I would appropriate it to the building.

Bath, July 8th, 1777.

To Mr. MICHAEL ONIONS.

My dear Brother,

Heartily thank you for your kind letter; and by you, I defire to give my best thanks to the dear companions in tribulation whom you meet, and who so kindly remember so worthless and unprositable a minister as me. May the God of all grace and love, our common Father, and our all, bless you all, and all our brethren, with all blessings spiritual: And with such temporal savours, as will best serve the end of your growth in grace.

My defire is, if I should be spared to minister to you again, to do it with more humility, zeal, diligence, and love; and to make more of you all than I have done. But as matters are, you must take the will for the deed. Let us all praise God for what is past, and trust him for what is to come. The Lord enable you to cleave together to Christ, and in him, to abide in one mind, striving together for the hope of the gospel, the sulness of the Spirit, and that kingdom of rightcousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, of which we have so often discoursed together, but into which

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we have not pressed with sufficient ardour and violence. God give us the humble, violent saith, which inherits the promise of the Father, that we may triumph in Christ, and adorn his gospel in life and death.

I hope to fee you before the fummer is ended, if it please God to spare me, and give me strength for the journey. I am in some respects better than when I came here, and was enabled to bury a corpfe last Sunday, to oblige the minister of the parish; but, whether it was that little exertion of voice, or fomething elfe, bad fymptoms have returned fince. Be that as it may, all is well; for he that does all things well, rules and over-rules all. I have flood the heats we have had thefe two days, better than I expected. I defire you will help me to bless the Author of all Good, for this, and every other bleffing of this life; but above all for the lively hopes of the next, and for Christ our common hope, peace, joy, wifdom, righteoufnefs, falvation, and all. In him I meet, love. and embrace you. God bless you all, and crown you with loving-kindness and tender mercy all the day long! I live, if you fland. Do not let me want the reviving cordial of hearing, that you stand together firm in the faith, broken in humility, and rejoicing in the living hope of the glory of God. Look much at Jesus. Bless God much for the gift of his only begotten Son. Be much in private prayer. Forfake not the affembling yourselves together in little companies, as well as in Walk in the fight of death and eternity; and ever pray for your affectionate, but unworthy minister,

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J. F.

Newington, Jan. 13th, 1777.

To the Parishioners of Madeley.

My dear Companions in Tribulation,

LL the children of God I love: My delight is in them that excel in strength, and my tenderest compassions move towards those that exceed in weakness. But of all the children of God, none have so great a right to my peculiar love as you. Your stated or occasional attendance on my poor ministry, and the countless thousands of steps you have taken to hear the word of our common Lord from my despised pulpit, as well as the bonds of neighbourhood, and the many happy hours I have spent before the throne of grace with you,

endear you peculiarly to me.

With tears of grateful joy, I recollect the awful moments, when we have, in the strength of our dear Redeemer, bound curse ves to stand to our baptismal vow:-To rem unce all fin, to believe all the articles of the Christian faith, and to keep God's commandments to the end of our life; especially, the new commandment, which enjoins us to love one another, as Christ has loved us. O, my dear brethren, let this repeated vow, fo reasonable, so just, and so comfortable, appear to us worthy of our greatest regard. For my own part, asking pardon of God, and you all, for not having exulted more in the privilege of keeping that vow every day better, and of loving you every hour more tenderly, I am not at all discouraged; but determine with new courage and delight, to love my neighbour as myself; and to love our Covenant God, Father; Son, and Holy Ghost, with all my mind, heart and firength; -with all the powers of my understanding, will, and affections. This resolution is bold, but it is evangelical; being equally founded on the precept and promise of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose cleansing blood can atone B 3

for all our past unfaithfulness, and whose almighty Spirit can enable us to perform all gospel obedience for the time to come.

I find much comfort, in my weak state of health, from my relation to my Covenant God: And by my relation to him as my Covenant God: I mean, 1. My clear, explicit knowledge of the Father as my Creator and Father; who so loved the World, you, and me, as to give his only begotten Son, that we should not perish but have everlasting life. O, my dear friends, what sweet exclamations, what endearing calling of Abba, Father, will ascend from our grateful hearts, if we say, with St. Paul, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how freely will he

give us all things," with that capital gift?

2. I mean by my covenant relation, my relation to the adorable Person, who, with the strength of his Godhead, and the strength of his pure manhood, took away my fin, and reconciled our fallen race to the divine nature, making us capable of recovering the divine union from which Adam fell. O how does my foul exult in that dear Mediator! How do I hide my poor foul under the shadow of his wings! There let me meet you all. Driven to that true mercy-feat by the fame danger, drawn by the same preferving and redeeming love; invited by the fame gospel promises, and encouraged by each others example, and by the example of that cloud of witnesses, who have passed into the kingdom of God by that precious door, let us by Christ return to God; let us in Christ find our reconciled God: And may that dear commandment of his, Abide in me, prove every day more precious to our fouls. If we abide in him by telieving that he is our way, our truth, and our life; by apprehending him as our Prophet or wifdom, our Priest or righteousness, our King or fanctification and redemption, we shall bear fruit, and

and understand what is meant by these scriptures, "In him, I am well pleased:"—" Accepted in the Beloved;" "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus:"—" God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," &c. O the comfort of thus cleaving to Christ by faith; of thus finding that Christ is our all! In that centre of life, let us all meet, and death itself will not separate us; for Christ, our Life, is the Resurrection; and Christ, our common resurrection, will bring us back from the grave, to worship him altogether, where absence and sickness shall interrupt and separate us no more.

I fometimes feel a desire of being buried, where you are buried, and having my bones lie in a common earthen bed with yours; but I soon resign that wish; and leaving that particular to Providence, I exult in thinking, that whatever distance there may be between our graves, we can now bury our fins, cares, doubts and fears, in the one grave of our divine Saviour; and that we rejoice each of us in our measure, that neither life nor death, neither things present nor things to come, shall ever be able, while we hang on the Crucisied, as he hung on the cross,) to separate us from Christ our Head, nor from the love of each

other, his members.

Love, then, one another, my dear brethren, I entreat you: By the pledges of redeeming love, which I have so often given you, while I said in his name, "The body of Christ which was given for thee"—"The blood of Christ which was shed for thee," to reconcile thee to God, and to cement thee to the brethren: By these pledges of divine love, I entreat you love one another. If I, your poor unworthy shepherd, am smitten, be not scattered; but rather be more closely gathered unto Christ, and keep near each other in faith and love, till you all receive our second Comforter and Ad-

vocate, in the glory of his fulness. You know I mean the Holy Spirit, the third Person in our Covenant God. "He is with you," but if you plead "the promise of the Father," which, says Christ, "you have heard of me, he will be in you." He will fill your souls with his light, love, and glory, according to that verse, which we have so often fung together.

"Refining fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my foul,
Scatter thy life through every part,
And fanctify the whole."

This indwelling of the Comforter, perfects the mystery of sanctification in the believer's soul. This is the highest blessing of the Christian Covenant on earth. Rejoicing in God our Creator, in God our Redeemer, let us look for the full comfort of God our Sanctifier. So shall we live and die in the faith, going on from faith to faith, from strength to strength, from comfort to comfort, till Christ is all in all, to us all.

My paper fails, but not my love. It embraces you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ; to whose love I earnestly recommend you, earnestly desiring you would recommend to his faithful mercy your affectionate friend and brother, your unworthy

pastor and fellow-helper in the faith,

P. S. I earnestly recommend to you all my dear brother Greaves. Shew him all the love you have shewn to me, and, if possible, shew him more, who is so much more deserving.

To Mr. THOMAS YORK and DANIEL EDMUNDS.

My dear Friends, Bristol, Nov. 1777.

Have received Mr. York's kind letter, and am encouraged, by the spirit of love and kindness which it breathes, as well as by your former offer

of helping me off with my burdens, to beg you

would settle some temporal affairs for me.

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The debt of gratitude I owe to a dying fifter, who once took a very long journey to fee me, when I was ill in Germany, and whom I just stopped from coming, last winter, to Newington to nurse me; the unanimous advice of the phyficians, whom I have confulted, and the opportunity of travelling with ferious friends, have at last determined me to remove to a warmer climate. As it is doubtful. very doubtful, whether I shall be able to stand the journey: And, if I do, whether I shall be able to come back to England; and, if I come back, whether I shall be able to serve my church; it is right to make what provision I can, to have it properly ferved while I live, and to fecure fome spiritual affidance to my ferious parishioners when I shall be no more. I have attempted to build a house in Madeley Wood, about the centre of the parish, where I should be glad the children might be taught to read and write in the day, and the grown up people might hear the word of God in the evening, when they can get an evangelist to preach it to them; and where the ferious people might affemble for focial worship when they have no teacher.

This has involved me in some difficulties about discharging the expence of that building, and paying for the ground it stands upon; especially as my ill health has put me on the additional expence of an affistant. If I had strength, I would serve my church alone, board as cheap as I could, and save what I could from the produce of the living to clear the debt, and leave that little token of my love, free from encumbrances to my parishioners. But as Providence orders things otherwise, I have another object, which is to secure a faithful minister to serve the church while I live. Providence has sent me dear Mr. Greaves, who loves the peo-

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ple, and is loved by them. I should be glad to make him comfortable; and as all the care of the flock, by my illness, devolves upon him, I would not helitate for a moment to let him have all the profit of the living, if it were not for the debt contracted about the room. My difficulty lies, then, between what I owe to my fellow-labourer, and what I owe to my parishioners, whom I should be forry to have burthened with a debt contracted for the room.

My agreement with Mr. Greaves was to allow him 20 guineas a year, out of which I was to deduct 12 for his board; but as I cannot board him while I go abroad, I defign to allow him during my absence sol. a year, together with the use of my house, furniture, garden, and my horse, if he chuses to keep one; reserving the use of a room. and stall in the stable, to entertain the preachers who help us in their round: Not doubting but that the ferious people will gladly find them and their horses proper necessaries. But I know so little what my income may come to, that I am not fure whether it will yield Mr. Greaves 501. after paying all the expences of the living. Now, I beg that you will confult together and fee, whether the vicar's income, i. e. tithes, &c. &c. will discharge all the expences of the living, and leave a refidue sufficient to pay a stipend of sol. I except the royalty, which I have appropriated to the expence of the room. If it be, well; if there be any furplus, let it he applied to the room; if there be any thing fhort, then Mr. Greaves may have the whole, and take his chance in that respect, as it will be only taking the vicar's chance: For I doubt, if fometimes, after necessary charges defrayed, the vicais have had a clear sol.

I beg you will let me know how the balance of my account stands, that, some way or other, I may order it to be paid immediately: For if the balance is against me, I could not leave England comfortably without having fettled the payment. A letter will fettle this business, as well as if twenty friends were at the trouble of taking a journey; and talking is far worse for me than reading or writing. I do not say this to put a slight upon my dear friends. I should rejoice to see them, if it were to answer any other end, than that of putting on a plaister,

to tear it off as foon as it flicks.

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Ten thousand pardons of my dear friends, for troubling them with this fcrawl about worldly matters. May God help us all, fo to fettle our eternal concerns, that when we shall be called to go to our long home and heavenly country, we may be ready, and have our acquaintance along with us. I am quite tired with writing, nevertheless, I cannot lay by my pen, without defiring my best Christian love to all my dear companions in tribulation and neighbours in Shropshire; especially to Mrs. York, Miss Simpson, Mrs. Harper, Mr. Scott, when Mr. York fees him, Winny Edmunds, and all enquiring friends. Thank Molly for her good management; and tell her, I recommend her to our common heavenly Master; and that if she wants to go to London, or come to Bristol, I shall give her fuch a character as will help her to fome good place, by the directions of a kind Providence. I heartily thank Daniel both as church-warden and as receiver and Foufe-steward, and I beg Mr. York again to pay him a proper falary. I am in the best bonds, your affectionate neighbour, friend, and minister,

To Mr. JEHU.

My dear Brother, Bristol, Nov.—1777.

Thank you for all your care and love. Beware of an infnaring world. You may keep the few things I lent you, as long as you stay at Madeley; when you remove, please to give them, or the amount to some of our poor brethren. Farewell R6

in Jesus. Life and death are both of them a blessing. I rejoice in the will of God every way; and set to my seal, that he is good, faithful, and gracious to the the chief of sinners, and least of all believers, even to your affectionate friend,

J. F.

To Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

My dear Brother, Bristol, Nov.—1777.

DARDON the trouble I have given you in my temporal concerns; it is more for the poor, and the Lord, than for me. O my dear friend, let us go thro' the things temporal, so as not to lose the things eternal. Let us honour God's truth, by believing his word, Christ's blood, by hoping firmly in divine mercy, and all the divine perfections, by loving God with all our hear s, and one another, as Christ loved us. My kind love to all the brethren on both sides the water.

Go from me to Mrs. Cound,—tell her, I charge her, in the name of God, to give up the world, to fet out with all speed for heaven, and to join the sew that sear God about her. If she resuses, call again, call weekly, if not daily, and warn her from me till she is ripe for glory. Tell the brethren at Broseley, that I did my body an injury the last time I preached to them on the Green; but I do not repine at it, if they took the warning, and have ceased to be neither hot nor cold, and begin to be warm in zeal, love, prayer, and every grace.—Give my love to George Crannage; tell him to make haste to Christ, and not to doze away his last days.

The physician has not yet given me up; but, I bless God, I do not wait for his farewell, to give myself up to my God and Saviour. I write by stealth, as my friends here would have me forbear doing it, and even talking; but I will never part with my privilege of writing and shouting, Thanks

be to God, who giveth us the victory over fin, death and the grave, through Jefus Christ! To him be

glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Tell Mr. York, I embrace him in spirit, and shall if it please God, find an opportunity to sulfil his kind request by Miss Simpson, whom together with my dear friend and good nurse, Mrs. Harper, I salute in the Lord. God bless you and yours. I am yours in the love of Jesus, the best of bonds, J. F.

To the Brethren who hear the word of God in the parish church of Madeley.

My dear Brethren, Bristol, Nov. 26th, 1777. I Thank you for the declaration of your affecti-I onate remembrance, which you have fent me by John Owen, the meffenger of your brotherly love. As a variety of reasons, with which I shall not trouble you, prevent my coming to take my leave of you in person, permit me to do it by letter. The hopes of recovering a little strength to come and ferve you again in the gospel, make me take the advice of the physicians, who say, that removing to a drier air and warmer climate, might be of great service to my health. I kiss the rod which fmites me. I adore the Providence which lays me afide; and beg that by this long correction of my heavenly Father, I may be fo pruned, as to bring forth more fruit, if I am spared.

I am more and more persuaded that I have not declared unto you cunningly devised sables, and that the gospel, I have had the honour of preaching though seed, among you, is the power of God to salvation, to every one who believes it with the heart. God grant we may all be of that happy number! Want of time does not permit me to give you more directions; but, if you follow those which fill the rest of this page, they may supply the want of a thousand. Have, every day, lower thoughts of your-selves.

felves, higher thoughts of Christ, kinder thoughts of your brethren, and more hopeful of all around you. Love to affemble in the great congregation, and with your companions in tribulation; but above all, love to pray to your Father in fecret; to consider your Saviour, who says Look unto me, and be faved; and to liften for your Sanctifier and Comforter, who whispers, that he stands at the door and knocks to enter into your inmost fouls, and to fet up his kingdom of rightcoufness, peace, and joy, with divine power, in your willing breafts. Wait all the day long for his glorious appearing within you; and, when you are together, by fuitable prayers, proper hymns, and enlivening exhortations, keep up your earnest expectation of his pardoning and fanclifying love. Let not a drop fatisfy you! desire an ocean; at least a fountain fpringing up to your comfort in your own fouls, and flowing towards all around you, in ffreams of love and delightful instructions, to the consolation of those with whom you converse; especially your brethren, and those of your own households. Do not eat your morfel by yourselves, like selfish niggardly people; but whether you eat the meat that perisheth, or that which endureth unto everlafting life, be ready to share it with all. Cast your bread upon the waters, in a temporal and spiritual sense, and it will not be lost. God will blefs your feed fown, and it will abundantly increase. Let every one, with whom you converse, be the better for your conversation. Be burning and fhining lights wherever you are. Set the fire of divine love to the hellish stubble of sin. valiant for the truth. Be champions for love. fons of thunder against fin; and fons of confolation towards humbled finners. Be faithful to your God, your king, and your masters. Let not the good ways of God be blasphemed through any of you.

you. Let your heavenly mindedness, and your brotherly kindness, be known to all men; so that all who see you may wonder, and say, "See, how

these people love one another!"

You have need of patience, as well as of faith, and power. You must learn to suffer, as well as to do the will of God. Do nor, then, think it strange to pass through fiery trials: They are excellent for the proving, purifying, and strengthening of your faith. Only let your faith be firm in a tempest. Let your hope in Christ be as a fure " anchor cast within the veil;" and your patient love will foon out-ride the storm, and make you find, there is a peace in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, which no man can give, or take away. May that peace be abundantly given to you, from our common Father, our common Redeemer, and our common Sanclifier, our Covenant God; the gracious God of Christians, whom we have so often vouched to be our God, and our all, when we have been affembled together in his name. He is the same merciful, and faithful God, " yesterday, to day, and for ever." Believe in his threefold Name. Rejoice in every degree of his great falvation. Triumph in hope of the glory which shall be revealed. Do not forget to be thankful for a cup of water; much less for being out of hell, for the means of grace, the forgiveness of fins, the blood of Jesus, the communion of faints on earth, and the future glorification of faints in heaven. Strongly, heartily, believe every gofpel truth, especially the latter part of the Apostle's Creed. Believe it, I say, till your faith becomes to you the fubstance of the eternal life you hope for; and then, come life, come death, either, or both, will be welcome to you, as, through grace, I find they

I leave this bleffed Island for awhile; but, I trust, I shall never leave the kingdom of God,

the Mount Sion, the New Jerusalem. the Shadow of Christ's Cross, the Clefts of the Rock smitten and pierced for us. There, I entreat you, to meet me. There I meet you in spirit. From thence, I trust, I shall joyfully leap into the ocean of Eternity, to go and join those ministring spirits who wait on the heirs of salvation: And, if I am no more permitted to minister to you in the land of the living, I rejoice at the thought, that I shall, perhaps, be allowed to accompany the angels, who, if you continue in the faith, will be commissioned to carry your fouls into Abraham's bosom. If our bodies do not moulder away in the same grave, our spirits shall be sweetly lost in the same sea of divine and brotherly Love. I hope to fee you again in the flesh: But my sweetest and firmest hope is, to meet you where there are no parting feas, no interpofing mountains, no fickness, no death, no fear of loving too much, no shame for loving too little, no apprehension of bursting new vessels in our lungs, by indulging the joy of feeing, or the forrow of leaving our brethren.

In the mean time, I earnestly recommend you to the pastoral care of the Great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, and to the brotherly care of one another, as well as to the ministerial care of my fubstitute. The authority of Love, which you allowed me to exert among you for edification, I return to you, and divide among you; humbly requesting, that you would mutually use it, in warning the unruly, supporting the weak, and comforting all. Should I be spared to come back, let me have the joy of finding you all of one heart and one foul; continuing stedfast in the apostle's doctrine, in fellowship one with another, and in communion with our fin-pardoning and fin-abhorring God. This you may do, through grace, by strongly believing in the atoning blood and fanc-

tifying

common life: In whom my foul embraces you, and in whose gracious hands, I leave both you and myself. Bear me on your hearts before him in praying love; and be persuaded, that you are thus borne by, My dear Brethren,

Yours, &c. J. F.

To the Society at Madeley.

Dover, Dec. 2, 1777. My dear Brethren, BY the help of divine providence, and of your prayers, I have got fafe to Dover; and I find that the journey has, fo far, been of service to me. I thought to have been in France by this time; but the wind being high, tho' favourable, the mariners were afraid to leave the fafe harbour, lest they should be driven on the French cliffs too fiercely. This delay gives me an opportunity of writing a line to tell you, that I shall bear you on my heart by fea and land; "that the earth is the Lord's with all the fulness thereof;" that Jesus lives to pray for us; and that I still recommend myself to your prayers, hoping to hear of your order, stedfastness, and growth of faith towards Christ, and in love towards each other, which will greatly revive your affectionate friend and brother.

To the Societies in and about Madeley.

My dear, very dear Brethren, Nyon, 1778.

THIS comes with my best love to you, and my best wishes, that peace, mercy, and truth may be multiplied unto you, from God the Father, thro' Jesus Christ, by the Spirit of his love; with which, I beg your hearts and mine may be daily more replenished.

I am yet in the land of the living, to prepare, with you, for the land where there is life without death, praifing

praising without weariness of the flesh, and loving without separation. There, I once more challenge you to meet me, with all the mind that was in Christ; and may not one hoof be left behind! May there not be found one Demas amongst you, turning aside from the little slock and the narrow way, to love and follow this present perishing world. May there not be one Esau, who, for a frivolous gratification sold his birthright; nor another wise of Lot, who looked back for the good things of the city of destruction, and was punished by a judgment, almost as fearful as that of Ananias, Sapphira, and Judas.

My dear companions, let us be confishent; let us feek first the kingdom of God and his righteous-ness, and all other things, upon your diligent, frugal, secondary endeavours, shall be added unto you. Let us live daily, more and more, upon the free love of our gracious Creator and Preserver, the grace and righteousness of our atoning Redeemer and Mediator, nor let us stop short of the powerful, joyous insuence of our Comforter

and Sanctifier.

Bear me on your hearts, as I do you upon mine: And meet me all in the heart of Christ, who is the centre of our union, and our common head; humbly leaving it to him, when, and where, we shall meet again. In the mean while, I beg you will pay a due regard to the following texts, "Love one another, as I have loved you.—By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. Little children, love not the world; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father," and of the brethren, "is not to him.—Be of one accord, of one mind. Let there be no divisions among you.—Mind not high things," but things which make for peace and edification.

Farewell

Farewell in Christ, till we meet in the stesh around his table, or in the spirit around his throne. My love and thanks to Mr. Murlin and Mr. Roberts. I am your afflicted, comforted brother, J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. GREAVES.

My dear Brother, Nyon, July 18th, 1778.

Expected to have had an answer to the two last letters I wrote you, but have been disappointed of my hope. Probably, your letters have miscarried in these troublesome times. I trust you lay yourself out in length and breadth for the good of the flock committed to your care. I should be glad to hear, that all the flock grow in grace, and that the little flock grow in humble love.

Be pleased to read the following note in the church-" John Fletcher begs a farther interest " in the prayers of the congregation of Madeley; "and defires those, who affemble to serve God " in the church, to help him to return public " thanks to Almighty God, for many mercies re-" ceived; especially, for being able to do every " day a little ministerial duty, which he confiders " as an earnest of the strength he should be glad to have, to come back foon, and ferve them in " the gospel; which he designs to do, please God, " in fome months. In the mean time, he hum-" bly befeeches them, to ferve God as Christians, " and to love one another as brethren; neglect-" ing no means of grace, and rejoicing in all " the hopes of glory."

I hope, my dear brother, that you remember my request to you, in my letter from Dover; and that you are glad of every possible help to do the people good. The harvest is great, the labourers are comparatively sew. Pray the Lord to send more labourers into his harvest: And rejoice, when

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when he fends us any, who will help us to break

up the fallow ground.

Be pleased, when you have an opportunity, to read the following note to the societies in Madeley, Dawley, and the Banks.

My dear Brethren,

I hope you have no need of a line to affure you of the continuance of my brotherly love for you. We are all called to grow in grace, and confequently, in love, which is the greatest of all Christian graces. Your prayers for my foul and my body have not been without answer. Blessed be God! Glory be to his rich mercy in Christ, I live yet the life of faith; and as to my body, I recover some strength; which rejoices me the more, as I hope a good Providence will make way for my laying it out, in inviting you to leave the things which are behind, and to press, with earnestness, unity, and patience, towards the mark of our heavenly calling in Christ. God bless you all with all the bleffings brought to the church by Christ Jesus, and by the other Comforter! Fare ye all well in Jesus, and remember at the throne of grace you affectionate brother and fervant in Christ,

My love to all our kind neighbours, and to the preachers, whom I beg you will thank in my name. Adieu, my dear brother. I am yours in the Lord,

J. F.

To Mr. THOMAS YORK.

Mydear Brother, Nyon, Sept. 15, 1778.

I Thank you for your love, and generous care of my little temporal concerns. I long to know how you all do. You may fee in the enclosed how I do in body. Blessed be the God of all confolation, though I have still very trying, feverish nihts, and nothing but forced evacuations. I am kept

kept in peace of mind; refigned to his will, who afflicts me for my good, and justly fets me afide for my unprofitableness. Well, though I am a bruised vessel, yet I rest on Him; he does not break me, yea, he comforts me on every fide. His grace within, and his people without, turn my trying circumstances into matter of praise.

Give my love to all your dear family, and to the two, or three, who may yet remember me at Shiffnal. Also give my love to Daniel, and defire him, when he gathers the Easter dues, to give my love and thanks to all my parithioners. Yours, J. F.

Adieu!

T. Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

My dear Friend, Nyon, Feb. 11, 1779. Have just received yours of the 24th Jan. and rejoice to hear of the welfare of your triends; but there is no bleffing here without some alloy of grief, and fuch was to me the account of the poor state of dear Mrs. Wase's health. The Lord be with her as a Comforter and Sanclifier, if he does not chuse to be with her as a Physician. Tell her, I should be glad to hold up her hands in her fight of affliction; but, if the poor, unprofitable, weak fervant, is far off, the Master, who is rich in mercy, who fills the whole world with his goodness and patience, and who has all power given him as our Brother, Son of Man, in heaven and earth: - this kind Master is near to her, and all his afflicted ones. Bid her from me, entreat her in my name, or rather, in his dear name, Jefus, Salvation, Refurrection, Life, Light, and Love, to look to him, and to make a free and constant use of him in all his offices.

I recommend to her two remedies; the one is a cheerful refignation to the will of God, whereby her animal spirits will be raised and sweetly refreshed;

freshed; the other is four lumps of heavenly sugar, to be taken every half hour, day and night, when she does not sleep. I make a constant use of them to my great comfort. They have quickened my foul when I was dying, and I doubt not but they will have the same effect upon hers. Our Church has already extracted that divine fugar from the scripture, and put it into the Common Prayerbook, as the heavenly bait, which is to draw us Tho' they have often passed to the Lord's table. thro' my mouth, when I have called her there, they have loft nothing of their sweetness and force. "God fo loved the world," &c. "If any man fin," &c. "It is a faithful faying," &c. "Come unto me all ye that are weary," &c. God grant her abundance of the faith, which rolls thefe heavenly pills in the mind, and much of that love, which fucks their sweetness in the heart. Tell her, they go down best, if taken in the cup of thanksgiving; into which a tear of defire, of humility, of repentance, or of joy, might be dropt occasionally. That tear is to be had, by looking simply to Him, who fells oil to the virgins, who offered a fpringing well to the woman of Samaria, and opened a fountain flowing with heavenly blood and water, when he hung for us upon the cross. To him be praise and glory for ever! Amen!

Tell my little god-daughter Patty Cartwright, she is big enough and bad enough to take them; and that the holy child Jesus came on purpose into the world to make them up for her. What a shame it is, to have such a remedy so near, and not to make more use of it to subdue our unbelief,

and cure our stupid ingratitude.

Thank brother Costerdine, and his fellow labourers, for their oceasional help; and may He, who gives the increase, abundantly bless it to them and to our friends. May the Lord vouchsafe to consecrate our little Zoar, by calling one sinner, and establishing one saint. How abundantly shall we be repaid for our little expense and trouble!

I am, Yours, &c. J. F.

Nyon, Feb. 11, 1779.

To the Brethren in and about Madeley.

My dear Companions in tribulation,

PEACE and mercy, faith, hope, and love be multiplied to you all in general, and to each of you in particular, from the Father of mercies, through the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Spirit of grace. I thank you for your kind remembrance of me in your prayers. I am yet spared to pray for you. O that I had more power with God! I would bring down all heaven into all your hearts. Strive together, in love, for the living faith, the glorious hope, the fanctifying, perfecting love. once delivered to the faints. Look to Jesus. Move on: run yourselves in the heavenly race, and let each fweetly draw his brother along, till the whole company appears before the Redeeming God in Sion, adorned as a bride for the heavenly Bridegroom.

I hope God will, in his mercy, spare me to see you in the slesh; and, if I cannot labour for you, I shall gladly suffer with you. If you will put health into my slesh, marrow in my bones, joy in my heart, and life into my whole frame, be of one heart, and of one foul. Count nothing your own but your sin and shame; and bury that dreadful property in the grave, the bottomless grave of our Saviour. Let all you are, and have, be his that bought you, and his members, for his sake Dig hard in the gospel mines for hidden treasure. I low hard the surnace of prayer with the bellows of saith, until you are melted into love, and the dross of sin is purged out of every heart. "There is a river that maketh glad the city of God;" it

is the grace that flows from his throne. Jefus is the vessel, the heavenly ark: Get together into him, and sweetly sail down into the ocean of eternity. So shall ye be true miners, surnace-men, and bargemen. Farewell in Jesus. J. F.

Nyon, May 18, 1779.

To the Rev. Mr. GREAVES.

My dear Fellow-labourer,

Y departure heing delayed some weeks gives me much concern, altho', from the confidence I have in your pastoral diligence, I am easy

about the flock you feed.

There was last week a visitation held here, and the clergy of the town took my part against the visiter and others, who said, "I was of a sect every where spoken against." The conversation about it held so long, and was so trying to my grain of humility, that I went out. The matter, however, ended peaceably, by a vote that they should invite me to dinner. God ever save us from jealous and persecuting zeal!

I hope, my dear friend, you go on comfortably, doing more and more the work of a growing evangelist. Remember my love to all I mentioned in my last, to as many of my parishioners as you meet with, and especially, to all our good neighbours and to the society. God bless you all; and enable you to persevere in prayer for yourself, for the flock, (which I once more recommend to you, with the lambs,—the children) and for your effectionate brother,

J. F.

To Mr. MICHAEL ONIONS.

My dear Brother, Nyon, May 18, 1779.

Have complied with the request of my friends, to stay a little longer among them, as it was backed by a small society of pious people gathered here.

here. Three weeks ago, they got about me, and, on their knees, with many tears, befought me to flay till they were a little stronger, and able to stand alone; nor would they rise, till they had got me to comply. Happy would it be for us all, if we prayed as earnestly to Him, who can give

us substantial bleffings.

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However, yesterday I spoke with a carrier from Geneva, to take me to London, who faid, he would give us a fortnight's notice. The Lord is always ready to give our hearts a lift to the kingdom of grace, thro' which we must pass to the kingdom of glory. May we be ready also! The comfort of this journey is, that we all may travel together, tho' our bodies are afunder; for Christ the way is every where, and faith in his word is, like his word, one and the same, in every age and country. So is holiness, the narrow way; for in all places we may love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourfelf. I hope you, and all your ferious friends travel thus; and that your journey is like that of St. Paul, who travelled hard, as one running for a prize—even for a crown of life.

Give my kind love to all who travel in this manner. Invite kindly all, who have not yet fet Stir up earnestly those that loiter, especially Thomas Powis, over whom my heart yearns. Above all, give them the example, of leaving the things behind, and preffing towards the mark with renewed vigour. Tell your wife, I hold her to her promise, of being the Lord's more than ever, because the time is shorter for us both. Tell your mother, I expect to find her a bruifed reed in herfelf, and a pillar in Christ Jesus. The Lord bless your brother and his wife, with that child born, that fon given, who shall live to restore to us those, whom death carries away. I hope Patty Cartwright, with her parents, will be made strong in faith and patience, if not in the body. Tell Mrs.

Ford.

Ford, I hope the is better in foul for her bodily weakness. If Mrs. Brooke is yet with her, I hope to find them fifters in Christ more than in Adam. I experience here, that kindred in the former is stronger and dearer, than in the latter. Tell Mr. Wase, I hope he is a widower in the Lord, devoting himself to the bringing up the Lord's family and his own: Both of which require close attendance. My love to your fellowleaders, and by them, to the companies you meet in prayer; also to Mr. Hatton, and the preachers who help in the round. My love also waits on I. Tranter, T. Poole, and T. Banks, and all who meet in their houses. Tell them, I hope to find them growing up into Christ in all things, particularly, in heavenly zeal, and humble love. Salute all our dear friends, and neighbours, for me. ' Farewell in the Lord. I am yours in him,

To Mr. THOMAS YORK.

Nyon, July 18, 1779. My dear Sir, DROVIDENCE, is still gracious to me, and raises me friends on all sides. May God reward them all, and may you have a double reward for all your kindness. I hope I am getting a little strength. The Lord has bleffed to me a species of black cherry, which I have eaten in large quantities. As a proof that I am better, I can inform you that I have preached once in this country; but as I was going to venture again, I had a return of spitting blood, so that I desisted. fortnight past, I have catechifed the children of the town every day; and I do not find much inconvenience from that exercise Some of them seem to be under fweet drawings of the Father, and a few of their mothers begin to come, and defire me with tears in their eyes, to flay in this country. They urge much, my being born here, and I reply, that as I was born again in England, that is, of course, the country which to me, is the dearer of the two. My friends have prevailed on me to publish A Poem on the Praises of God, which I wrote many years ago. The revising it for the press is at once a business and a pleasure, which I go thro' on horseback. Help me, by your prayers, to ask a blessing on this little attempt; and may the God of all grace, who deserves so much our praises for the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, give us such a spirit of thankful praise, that we may bless and praise him, as David did formerly.

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Remember me in brotherly love to all your family, and to all friends about you, especially, to those who fear God and love the gospel. Let us grow in humble love, which becomes those, who believe themselves redeemed by the blood of the Son of God, to be a peculiar people, zealous of

kind offices, and all manner of good works.

I wish I could procure you an estate in this fine country, as I hope to do Mr. Perronet, one of the physicians who shewed me so much love, when I lay sick at Paddington. His grandfather was a Swiss, who was naturalized in the reign of Queen Anne. By calling upon some of his relations, I have found, that he is entitled to an estate of some thousand pounds, of which he is coming to take possession. So Providence prepares for me a friend, a kind physician, and a fellow-traveller, to accompany me back to England; where one of my chief pleasures will be to embrace you, if God spare us to meet again, and to assure you, how much I am, My dear Friend, your obliged servant,

J. F.

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To the Rev. Mr. GREAVES.

My dear Brother, Nyon, Dec. 25, 1779. CLORY be to God for his unspeakable gift! I May that Jesus, that eternal, all-creating, all-supporting, all-atoning, all-comforting Word, which was with God, and is God, and came in the likeness of finful flesh to dwell among men, and to be our Emmanuel, God with us: May he by a lively faith, be formed in our hearts, and, by a warm love, lie and grow in the manger of our emptiness, filling it always with the bread that comes down from heaven! Tho' absent in body, I am with you, and the flock in spirit. You are now at the Lord's table-O! may all the dear fouls, you have just now preached to, receive Jesus Christ in the pledge of his dying love; and go home with this lively conviction, "God has given " me eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He " that hath the Son hath life: I have the Son, I 's have life, even eternal life. The way, the truth, " the life, and happiness, are mine; and now return unto thy rest, O my soul. Lord, let thy " servant depart in peace; for mine eyes—the eyes " of my faith have feen, the hand of my faith " hath handled, the mouth of my faith hath tafted "thy falvation: A falvation prefent, unspeakable, " and eternal."

Glory be to God in heaven! Peace on earth! Love and Good-will every where; but especially, in the spot, what Providence has called us to cry, "Behold! what manner of love the Father hath testified to us, in Jesus, that, we children of wrath, should be made children of God," by that only begotten Son of the Most High, who was born for our regeneration, crucified for our atonement, raised for our justification, and now triumphs in heaven for our sanctification, for our full redemption, and for our eternal glorification. To him be glory for

for ever and ever; and may all who fear and love him about you, fay for ever, Amen! Hallelujah!

Out of the fulness of my heart I invite them to do so; but how shallow is my sulness to his! What a drop to an ocean without bottom or shore! Let us, then, receive continually from Him, who is the overflowing, and ever present source of pardoning, sanctifying, and exhibitating grace; and from the foot of the Wrekin, where you are, to the foot of the Alps where I am, let us echo back to each other, the joyful, thankful cry of the primitive Christians, (which was the text here this morning,) "Out of his sulness we have all received grace for grace."

I long to hear from you and the flock. How do you go on? Answer this and my last together; and let me know, that you cast joyfully all your burdens on the Lord. Mr. Ireland sends me word, Mr. Romaine told him, you were not very well. Take care of yourself. Lay nothing to heart. Should your breast be weak, preach but once on Sunday; for you know the evening sermon is not a part of our stated duty. I say this, that you may not over do, and lie by, as I do. God direct, sustain, and comfort you in all things!

Our Lord Lieutenant, being stirred up by some of the clergy, and believing firmly that I am banished from England, has taken the alarm still more, and forbidden the ministers to let me exhort in their houses; threatening them with the power of the senate, if they did. They all yielded, but are now ashamed of it. A young clergyman, a true Timothy, has opened me his house, where I exhort twice a week; and the other clergymen, encouraged by his boldness, come to our meetings.

Give my kind pastoral love to all my flock in general, and to all who fear God, and love Jesus, and the brethren, in particular. May all see, and

feel more abundantly, the falvation of God. May national diffress be fanctified unto them; and may they all be loyal subjects of the King of kings, and of his anointed, our King. May the approaching new year be to them a year of peace and gospel grace. Remember me kindly to all our neighbours, whom I mentioned by name in my preceding letters. I hope Molly takes good care of you. God bless her! That you and the flock may farewell in Jesus, is the hearty prayer of yours,

To the Rev. Mr. GREAVES.

My dear Brother, Nyon, March 7, 1780. I Long to hear from you. I hope you are well, and grow in the love of Christ, and of the souls bought with his blood, and committed to your care. May you have the comfort of bringing them all into the pastures of the gospel, and seeing them thrive under your pastoral care. I recommend to your care the most helpless of the flock,—I mean the children and the sick. They most want your help; and they are the most likely to benefit by it; for affliction softens the heart, and children are not yet quite hardened thro' the deceitfulness of sin.

I beg you will not fail, when you have opportunity, to recommend to our flock, to honour the King, to study to be quiet, and to hold up, as much as lies in us, the hands of the government by which we are protected. Remember me kindly to Mr. Gilpin, and to all our parishioners. God give you peace by all means, as, in his mercy, he does to your affectionate friend and fellow-labourer,

To Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

My dear brother, Nyon, March 7, 1780.

I Am forry the building has come to so much more than I intended; but, as the mischief is done, it is a matter to exercise patience, resignation, and self-denial; and it will be a caution in suture. I am going to sell part of my little estate here to discharge the debt. I had laid by 50l. to print a small work, which I wanted to distribute

print a small work, which I wanted to distribute here; but, as I must be just, before I presume to offer that mite to the God of truth, I lay by the design, and shall send that sum to Mr. York. Money is so scarce here, at this time, that I shall sell at a very great loss; but necessity and justice are two great laws, which must be obeyed. As I design, on my return to England, to pinch until I have got rid of this debt, I may go and live in one of

the cottages belonging to the vicar, if we could let the vicarage for a few pounds; and in that case, I dare say, Mr. Greaves would be so good as to

take the other little house.

My dear friend, let us die to fin, hold fast Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, walk by faith in him, and not by the fight and passions of the old Adam. I hope the fun of affliction, which burns poor England and us, will ripen us all for glory. Give my best love to all our friends in Christ, and tell them, that the hope of feeing them does me good, and that I truff, they will not turn it into bitterness; which would be the case, if I should find them out of the narrow way, and out of the kingdom of righteoufness, peace, and joy in the Lord. Salute dear John York; hold up his hands for me, and bid him stand fast in the Lord; leaning upon the crofs of Him, who bruifed the ferpent's head, and overcame death, and hell, and the grave, by pulling out fin, the sting of death. Farewell in Jesus Christ. J. F. Nyon, C 4

Nyon, Sept. 15th, 1780.

To the Rev. Mr. GREAVES.

My dear Fellow-labourer,

I Had fixed the time of my departure for this month; but now two hinderances stand in my way. When I came to collect the parts of my manuscript, I found the most considerable part wanting; and, after a thousand searches, I was obliged to write it over again. This accident obliged me to put off my journey; and now the change of weather has brought back some symptoms of my disorder. I speak, or rather, whisper with difficulty; but I hope the quantity of grapes I begin to eat will have as good an effect upon me, as in the two last autumns. Have patience then a little while. If things are not as you could wish, you can do, but as I have done for many years-" learn patience by the things which you fuffer." Croffing our will, getting the better of our own inclinations, and growing in experience, are no mean advantages; and they may all be yours. Mr. Ireland writes me word, that if I return to England now, the winter will undo all I have been doing for my health for many years. However. I have not quite laid by the defign of spending the winter with you; but don't expect me till you see me. I am, nevertheles, firmly purposed, that if I do not set out this autumn, I shall do so next spring, as early as I can.

Till I had this relapse, I was able, thank God to exhort in a private room three times a week: But the Lord Lieutenant will not allow me to get into a pulpit, though they permit the school-masters, who are laymen, to put on a band and read the church prayers: So high runs the prejudice. The clergy, however, tell me that if I will renounce my ordination, and get presbyterian orders

among

among them, they will allow me to preach: And, on these terms, one of the ministers of this town offers me his curacy. A young Clergyman of Geneva, tutor to my nephew, appears to me a truly converted man; and he is so pleased when I tell him, there are converted souls in England, that he will go over with me to learn English, and converse with the British Christians. He wrote last summer with such sorce to some of the clergy, who were stirring up the fire of persecution, that he made them ashamed, and we have since had

peace from that quarter.

There is little genuine piety in these parts; nevertheless, there is yet some of the form of it: fo far, as to go to the Lord's table regularly four times a year. There meet the adulterers, the drunkards, the fwearers, the infidels, and even the materialists. They have no idea of the double damnation that awaits hypocrites. They look upon partaking that facrament, as a ceremony enjoined by the magistrate. At Zurich, the first town of this country, they have lately beheaded a clergyman, who wanted to betray his country to the Emperor, to whom it chiefly belonged. It is the town of the great reformer Zuinglius; yet there they poisoned the sacramental wine a few years ago. Tell it not in Gath! I mention this to shew you there is occasion and great need to bear a testimony against the faults of the clergy here; and if I cannot do it from the pulpit, I must try to do it from the press. Their canons, which were composed by 230 pastors, at the time of the reformation, are so spiritual and apostolick, that I defign to translate them into English, if I am spared.

Farewell, my dear brother. Take care, good, constant care of the flock committed to your charge; especially the sick and the young. Salute all our dear parishioners. Let me still have a part in your

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prayers public and private; and rejoice in the Lord, as, through grace, I am enabled to do in all my little tribulations. I am your affectionate friend and fellow-labourer.

J. F.

To Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

My dear Brother, Nyon, Sept. 15, 1780. YOU are also entitled to many thanks; receive them from me, till I can return you something more fubstantial. Give my love and thanks to the preachers, who come and help us. Enforce my little exhortation to the focieties in much love. Go and comfort from me Mrs. Palmer and Mrs. Cartwright; and fince God has placed you all in a widowed flate, agree to take Jesus for a never dying friend and bridegroom. Your Maker is your husband. He is all in all; and what, then, have you loft? Christ is yours and all things with him. The refurrection day will foon come. Prepare yourselves for the marriage feast of the Lamb, and till then rejoice in the expectation of that day. I fympathize with our fickly friends widow Matthews, M. Blummer, L. Whittaker, I. York, and S. Aston. Salute them kindly from me. Help them to trim their lamps, and wait for the Bridegroom. Bid them not be discouraged. Thank Thomas and Nelly Fennel for their love to the preachers, and give them mine, as well as John Owen, &c. by whom, I fend it to the little companies they meet with, to call for ftrength, comfort, and help, in time of need. Fare ye all well in Jesus. I say again, Farewell. I am I. F. yours,

To Mr. THOMAS YORK.

My dear Friend, Nyon, Sept. 15, 1780.

You fee by my letter to Mr. Greaves, that I am in good hopes of feeing you, at the latest next spring. I have been so well, that my friends here

here thought of giving me a wife; but what should I do with a Swifs wife at Madeley? I want rather and Englith nurse; but more still a mighty Saviour, and thanks be to God, that I have. Help me to rejoice in that never dying, never

moving Friend.

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Having heard that my dear friend Ireland has discharged the greatest part of my debt, I have not fent money; but I hope to bring with me rool. to make up that gap, and reimburse my friends in part, till I can do it altogether. But I fhall never be able to pay you the debt of kindness I have contracted with you. I look to Jesus, my furety, for that: May he repay you a thousand fold! Remember me kindly to Mrs. York, Mrs. Harper, and all that yet remember your obliged friend and brother,

Nyon, Sept. 15, 1780.

To the focieties in and about Madeley.

RACE and peace, truth and love be multi-I plied unto you all. Stand fast in the Lord my dear brethren. Stand fast to Jesus; stand fast to one another; stand fast to the vow we have so often renewed together upon our knees and at the Lord's table. Resolve to save yourselves altogether. Don't be fo unlovin, fo cowardly, as to let one of your little company fall into the hands of the world and the Devil: And agree to crucify the body of fin altogether.

I am still in a strait between the work, which Providence cuts out for me here, and the love which draws me to you. When I shall have the pleafure of feeing you, let it not be embttered by the forrow of finding any of you half-hearted and lukewarm. Let me find you all firong in the Lord, and increased in humble love. Salute from me all that followed with us fifteen years ago. Care still for your old brethren. Let there be no Cain among you, no Esau, no Lot's wife. Let the love of David and Jonathan, heightened by that of Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and our Lord, shine in all your thoughts, your tempers, your words, your loaks, and your actions. If you love one another, your little meetings will be a renewed feast; and the God of love, who is peculiarly present where two or three are gathered together, in the name of Jesus, and in the spirit of love, will abundantly bless you. Bear me still upon your breasts in prayer, as I do you pon mine; and rejoice with me, that the Lord, who made, redeemed, and comforts us, bears us all upon his. I am yours in him.

J. F.

To Mr. JOHN OWEN.

Nyon, Feb. 14, 1781

I Thank you, my dear Brother, for your kind lines. I have deferred answering them, till I could inform you of the time of my departure hence, which you will see in my letter to Mr. Wase. I hope you help both Mr. Greaves and the preachers, to stir up the people in my parish. Strengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die. I hope you take counsel with Michael Onions, Mrs. Palmer, and Molly Cartwright, about the most effectual means to recover the back-sliders; and to keep together in Christ, and to each other those who still hold their shield. Salute them kindly from me, and tell them, that I hope they will give me a good account of their little companies, and of themselves.

If I were not a minister, I would be a schoolmaster, to have the pleasure of bringing up children in the fear of the Lord: that pleasure is yours; relish it, and it will comfort and strengthen you in your work. The joy of the Lord, and of charity is our strength. Salute the children from me, and tell them, I long to shew them the way to

happiness

happines and heaven. Pray, have you mastered the stiffness and shyness of your temper? Charity gives a meekness, an affability, a child-like simplicity, and openness, which nature has denied you, that grace might have all the honour of it. Let me find you shining by these virtues, and you will revive me much. God bless your labour about

the sheep and the lambs.

I need not tell you to remember me to your friends, not excepting your brother in law, your fifter, and your niece Sally; to whose friendship I recommend my god-daughter Patty Cartwright. Go to James Hinksman, gives him my love, and ask his for me, and his old brethren. Give the same commission to T. Fennel and Nelly, with respect to Samuel Stretton and his wife; likewise to Serjeant Lee, with respect to his brother Thomas; and to I. Tranter, T. Banks, and T. Pool, with respect to their friends about them. Remember me to all friends. I am yours affectionately,

P. S. Read the following note to all that fear God, and love Jesus and each other, affembling in Madeley church.

My dear Brethren,

My heart leaps with joy at the thought of coming to fee you, and bless the Lord with you. Let us not stay to praise him till we see each other. Let us see him in his Son, in his word, in his works, and in all the members of Christ. How slow will post horses go, in comparison of love!

" Quick as feraphick flames we move,
"To reign with Christ in endless day."

Meet me, as I do you—in spirit; and we shall not stay till April or May to bless God together: Now will be the time of union and love.

To Mr. WILLIAM WASE.

My dear Friend, Nyon Feb. 14, 1781.

I Thank you for your kind remembrance of me. I need not be urged to return: Brotherly love draws me to Madeley, and circumstances drive me hence. With pleasure I see the days lengthen, and hasten the happy hour, when I shall see the little flock rejoicing in God, as, through mercy, I do. I am exceeding glad that there is a revival on your side the water, and that you are obliged

to enlarge your room.

I wish I could contribute to shake the dry bones in my parish; but I have no considence in the sless ; and what I could not do, when I was in my strength, I have little prospect of doing now that my strength is broken. However, I do not despair: For the work is not mine, but the Lord's. If the sew who love the gospel would be simple and zealous, God would again hear their prayers for those, who are content to go on in the broad way. I thank you for your view of the iron bridge. I hope, the word, and the saith, that works by love, will erect a more solid and durable bridge, to unite those who travel together towards Sien.

My friend Ireland invites me to go and join him in the South of France; and I long to see, whether I could not have more liberty to preach the word among the Papists, than among the Protestants. But it is so little I can do, that I doubt much, whether it is worth while going so far upon so little a chance. If I were stronger, and had more time, the sear of being hanged should not detain me. I trust to set out next month, and to be in England in May: It will not be my fault, if it is not in April.

I am here in the midst of the rumours of war. The burghers of Geneva, on the side of the opposition, position, have disarmed the garrison, and taken possession of one of the gates. I had, however, the luck to get in and bring away my nephew, who is a student there. Some troops are preparing to go and block them up. The Lord may at this time punish the repeated backflidings of those Laodicean Christians, most of whom have turned infidels. This event may a little retard my journey, as I must pass thro' Geneva. also puts off the printing my manuscript, for there is nothing going on in that unhappy town but difputes, and fights, and mounting of guards. Remember me in much love to Mr. Greaves, Mr. Gilpin, and the preachers who labour with us. Oh! my friend, give yourfelf wholly up to the Lord, and you will have that peace and joy, thro' Christ and righteousness, which will be worth a little heaven to you. Adieu,

Yours, J. F.

To Mr. MICHAEL ONIONS.

Nyon, March, 1781.

Thank you, my dear Brother, for your kind remembrance of me, and for your letters: I hope to bring my fuller thanks to you in person. Come, hold up your hands. Confirm the feeble knees. Set up an Ebenezer every hour of the day. In every thing give thanks; and in order to this, pray without ceafing and rejoice evermore. My heart sympathizes with poor Molly Cart-Tell her from me, that her hutband wright. lives in Him who is the refurrection, and that I want her to live there, with him. In Christ there is no death, but the victory over death. O! let us live in him, to him, for him, who more than repairs all our losses. I long to rejoice with her in hopes of meeting our departed friends, where parting and trouble shall be no more.

My love to your wife: Tell her the promifed me, to be Jesus's, as well as yours. I trust her mother ripens faster for glory, than for the grave. I hope to find her quite mellowed by the humble love of the gospel. My love to John Owen, and all our other leaders, and by them, to the few who do not tire by the way. With regard to the others, take them in the arms of prayer and love, and carry them out of Egypt and Sodom, if they are loath to come. Despair of none. You know charity hopeth all things, and brings many things to pass. All things are possible to him that believeth, all things are easy to him that loveth. God be with you, my dear brother, and make you faithful unto death. It is my prayer for you, and all the fociety, and all my dear neighbours, my dear parishioners, to whom I beg to be remembered. I have no place to write their names; but I pray they may be all written in the book of life. God is merciful, gracious, and faithful: I fet my feal to his loving kindness; Witness my heart and hand,

JOHN FLETCHER.

FAMILIAR LETTERS.

To the Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY.

Rev. Sir, Tern, Nov. 24, 1756.

A S I look upon you as my spiritual guide, and cannot doubt of your patience to hear, and your experience to answer a question, proposed by one of your people, I freely lay my case be-

tore you.

Since the first time I began to feel the love of God shed abroad in my foul, which was, I think, at seven years of age, I resolved to give myself up to him, and to the service of his Church, if ever I was fit for it; but, the corruption which is in the world, and that which was in my heart, foon weakened, if not erafed those first characters, which grace had written upon it. However, I went thro' my studies, with a design of going into orders; but afterwards, upon ferious reflection, feeling I was unequal to fo great a burden, and difgusted by the necessity I should be under to subscribe the doctrine of Predestination, I yielded to the defire of my friends, who would have me to go into the army: But just before I was quite engaged in a military employment, I met with fuch disappointments as occasioned my coming to England. Here I was called outwardly three times to go into orders; but upon praying to God, that if those calls were not from him, they might come to nothing, fomething always blafted the defigns of my friends; and in this, I have often admired the goodness of God, who prevented my rushing into that important employment, as the horse into the battle. I never was more thankful for this favour, than fince I heard the gospel in its purity. Before

Before I had been afraid, but then I trembled to meddle with holy things; and refolved to work out my falvation privately, without engaging in a way of life, which required fo much more grace and gifts, than I was confcious I possessed ; yet, from time to time, felt warm and strong desires, to cast myself and my inability on the Lord, if I should be called any more, knowing that he could help me, and shew his strength in my weakness: And these desires were increased, by some little success, which attended my exhortations and let-

ters to my friends.

I think it necessary to let you know, Sir, that my patron often defired me to take orders, and faid he would foon help me to a living; to which I coldly answered, I was not fit, and that besides, I did not know how to get a title. The thing was in that flate, when about fix weeks ago, a gentleman, I hardly knew, offered me a living, which, in all probability will be vacant foon; and a clergyman, I never fpoke to, gave me of his own accord, the title of curate to one of his livings. Now, Sir, the question which I beg you to decide is, Whether I must and can make use of that title to get into orders? For, with respect to the living, were it vacant, I have no mind to it; because, I think, I could preach with more fruit in my native country, and in my own tongue.

I am in suspence: On one side, my heart tells me, I must try, and it tells me so, whenever I feel any degree of the love of God and man; on the other, when I examine, whether I am sit for it, I so plainly see my want of gifts, and especially, of that soul of all the labours of a minister,—love, continual, universal, slaming love, that my considence disappears; I accuse myself of pride to dare to entertain the desire, of supporting one day the ark of God; and conclude, that an extraordinary punishment will, sooner or later, over-

take my rashness. As I am in both of these frames successively, I must own, Sir, I do not see which of these two ways before me, I can take with safety; and I shall gladly be ruled by you; because, I trust, God will direct you in giving me the advice, you think will best conduce to his glory, which is the only thing I would have in view in this affair. I know how precious your time is, and desire no long answer,—persist, or forbear, will satisfy and influence, Rev. Sir, your unworthy servant,

J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY.

Rev. Sir, London, May 26, 1757.

IF I did not write to you before Mrs. Wesley had A asked me, it was not, that I wanted a remembrancer within, but rather an encourager without. There is, generally, upon my heart fuch a fenfe of my unworthiness, that I sometimes dare hardly open my mouth before a child of God; and think it an unspeakable honour to stand before one, who has recovered fomething of the image of God or fincerely feeks after it. Is it possible, that fuch a finful worm as I should have the privilege to converse with one, whose foul is sprinkled with the blood of my Lord! The thought amazes,confounds me, and fills my eyes with tears of humble joy. Judge, then, at what distance I must fee myself from you, if I am so much below the least of your children: And whether a remembrancer within fuffices to make me prefume to write to you whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.

I rejoice that you find every where an increase of praying souls. I doubt not but the prayer of the righteous hath great power with God; yet I cannot believe, that it should hinder the suffilling of Christ's gracious promises to his Church. He must, and certainly will come, at the time appointed; for he is not slack, as some men count slackness;

and altho', he would have all to come to repenta ce yet, he has not forgot to be true and just. Only he will come with more mercy, and will increase the light, that shall be at evening-tide, according to his promise in Zech. xiv. 7. I should rather think, that the visions are not yet plainly disclosed; and that the day, and year, in which the Lord will begin to make bare his arm openly, are still concealed from us.

I must say to Mr. Walsh, as he said once to me concerning God, "I wish I could attend him every where, as Elisha did Elijah." But since the will of God calls me from him, I must submit, and drink the cup prepared for me. I have not seen him, unless for a few moments, three or four times, before divine service. We must meet at the throne of grace, or meet but seldom. O when will the communion of saints be complete! Lord hasten the time, and let me have a place among them, that love thee, and love one another infincerity.

I fet out in two days for the country. O may I be faithful! Harmless like a dove, wise like a ferpent, and bold as a lion for the common cause! O Lord do not forsake me! Stand by the weakest of thy fervants, and enable thy children to bear with me, and wrestle with thee in my behalf. O bear with me, dear Sir, and give me your blessing every day, and the Lord will return it to you fevenfold. I am, Rev. and dear Sir, your unworthy servant,

To Mrs. GLYNNE.

Madam, London, April 18, 1758.

S it is never too late to do what multiplicity of business, rather than forgetfulness, has forced us to defer, I am not ashamed, tho' after some months, to use the liberty you gave me, to enquire after the welfare of your soul; and that

formuch the more, as I am conscious I have not forgotten you at the throne of grace. O may my petitions have reached heaven, and forced from thence, at least some drops of the e spiritual showers of righteousness, peace, and joy in the

Holy Ghost, which I implore for you.

Tho', I trust, the unction from above teaches you all things needful to falvation, and especially the necessity of continuing instant in prayer, and watching thereunto with all perseverance; yet, I think it my duty to endeavour to add wings to your desires after holiness, by enforcing them with mine. O were I but clothed with all the righteousness of Christ, my prayers would avail much; and the lukewarmness of my brethren would not increase my guilt, as being myself and instance of that coldness of love, which puts me upon inter-

ceding for them.

Tho' I speak of lukewarmness, I do not accuse you, Madam, of having given way to it; on the contrary, it is my duty, and the joy of my heart, to hope, that you stir up more and more the gift of God, which is in you; that the evidences of your interest in a bleeding Lord get clearer every day; that the love of Christ constrains you more and more to deny yourfelf, take up your cross in all things, and follow him patiently, thro' bad and good report :- In a word, that continually leaving the things which are behind, you firetch forward, thro' funshine or darkness towards the prize of your high calling in Jesus Christ-I mean a heart emptied of pride, and filled with all the fulness of God. This is the hope, which I delight to entertain of you; and I describe it, not out of flattery, Madam. but with an intent that, if you fall short in any thing, these lines may be an instrument in the hand of God to stir you up again, and make you look on all things as dung and drofs, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Fefus Christ.

with whom we ought to be crucified to the world, and the world to us.

I have often thought of you, Madam, in reading the letters of a Lady,* who was a Christian, and an eminent Christian, not to say one of the brightest lights, that God has raised since the late revival of godliness. The reproach of Christ was her crown of rejoicing, his cross her continual support, his followers her dearest companions, his example the pattern of her conversation. She lived a saint, and died an angel. Each one of her letters may be a pattern for Christian correspondents, by the simplicity, edification, and love they breathe in every line. O when shall I write as she did! When my heart shall be full of God as hers was.

May the Lord enable you to walk in her steps, and grant me to fee you shining among the humble, loving Marys of this age, as she did but a few months ago. Her God is our God: The fame Spirit, that animated her, is waiting at the door of our hearts, to cleanfe them and fill them with his confolations, if we will but exclude the world, and let him in. Why should we then give way to despondency, and refuse to cherish that lively hope, which if any one has, he will "purify himfelf, even as God is pure?" Take courage then, Madam, and confider, that the hour of felfdenial, and painful wrestling with, God will be Thort, and the time of victorious recompence as long as eternity itself. May the Lord enable you and me, to weigh that confideration in the balance of his fanctuary, and to act agreeably: and may that gracious Being, who invites the young man to honour him in the days of his youth, grant you to fee him, whom he has given you, pender those solemn truths betimes, and find by a happy experience, that none is happier than he, who takes early the Lord's yoke upon himfelf.

I conclude, by commending you to the Lord, and to the Word of his grace, and recommending myself to your prayers, I am Madam, your obedient servant for Christ's sake,

J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, London, Dec. 12, 1758.

If my filence was owing to forgetfulness, I should blush at not availing myself more frequently of your permission to write; but the idea I entertain, that nothing but your great condescension can make my correspondence supportable, makes me sometimes act in a manner quite contrary to the sentiments of my heart.

Before I left Tern, the Lord gave me a medicine to prepare me to suffer what awaited me here.

This humiliation prepared me fo well, that I was not furprifed to learn, that a person in London had spread abroad many false and scandalous things of me, during my absence; and that the minds of many were prejudiced against me. In one fenfe, I took a pleafure in thinking, that I was going to be rejected by the children of God, and that my Saviour would become more dear, under the idea, that as in heaven, fo now on earth, I should have none but him. The first time I appeared in the chapel, many were fo offended, that it was with difficulty they could forbear interrupting me in my prayer, to tell me, Physician heal thyself. I was on the point of declining to officiate, fearing I should only give fresh offence; indeed, I should have done so, had it not been for my friend Bernon, who preffed me to stand firm, representing the triumph my filence would give my enemies, &c. His reasons appeared to me fo cogent, that, as your brother did not reject my affiftance, I read prayers, and engaged

gaged to preach fometimes in a morning, which I

have accordingly continued to do.

The fame day I arrived in London, our poor friend Bernon took to his bed, as if the Lord had waited my presence to give the blow. Three days after the fever increased, and appeared to be dangerous. The next day, which was Wednesday, he fettled his temporal concerns. Friday evening he was free from fever, and I had fome hopes of his life; but on Saturday it appeared, that the fever was the lightest part of his malady, and the Physician faid, he would die of an inflammation in his bowels; which was the case on Monday, after an illness of eight days. I fat up with him three nights, and faw him as often as I could by day; and bleffed be God, I did not fee him for a moment without the full assurance of faith. His foul was in general, divided between the exercise of repentance, and of faith in the blood of the Lamb; however, from time to time, repentance gave place to rejoicing; and when he appeared better, he expressed much fear of returning to life. Nevertheleis, one day, when I was not with him, he had a conflict with the enemy of his faith, which continued an hour or two, when he came off conqueror. The violence of the fever fometimes threw him into a delirium, and that was the case some hours before his dissolution. The last words he uttered, before the strength of his difease deprived him of speech, were, "O what love! What love!" I have in my heart a clear testimony that he died the death of the just. Thus to recompence me for the injury fatan has done me by a false friend, the Lord has taken to himfelf a true one, whom he will restore to me again in the last great day: Such a loss is a real gain.

I fincerely rejoice in the health of Mrs. Wesley. Present my compliments to her—not those of the children of this world, but those of the servants

of Christ; and do not forget to give your little Charles a kis of peace and prayer for me, Adieu. J. F.

To the Rev. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, London, March 22, 1759. TOU left me without permitting me to favi I farewell; but that shall not hinder me from wishing you a good journey, and I flatter myfelf, that you are in the habit of returning my prayers. I have even shared the joy of Mrs. Wesley in seeing you again. Happier than the afflicted Jefus, you leave your own, and they regret your abfence; you return to your own, and they receive you with joy. You cannot yet be rendered perfect by fuffering; your father and mother have never forfaken you: but, no matter, you have no doubt your afflictions: and probably, the Lord puts you fecretly in a crucible, that you may come forth as gold seven times tried in the fire. May he lay his hand upon you, and fill you with his strength! He will not forget Mrs. Wesley: I have had fome affurances that he will not, when I have been enabled to lay at the feet of Jefus the delightful burden you put upon me, by interesting me in her present critical circumstances. If I were more humble, I would beg you to prefent her my humble respects; and if I were strong in faith like Elizabeth, I could fay, like her, with that fulness of the Spirit which should go to her heart, "Bleffed art thou among women, and bleffed is the fruit of thy womb!" But it becomes not me to presume so far; I shall be happy if my good wishes may be found sincere before God.

Since your departure, I have lived more than ever like a hermit. It feems to me that I am an unprofitable weight upon the earth. I want to hide myself from all. I tremble when the Lord favours me with a fight of myself; I tremble to

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think of preaching only to dishonour God. Tomorrow I preach at West-Street with all the feelings of Jonah: O would to God I might be attended with his fuccess! If the Lord shall, in any degree, fustain my weakness, I shall consider myfelf as indebted to your prayers. The Adversary avails himself mightily of the enthusiasm of Miss A—d to prevent the fuccess of my preaching in French; but I believe that my own unworthiness does more for the devil, then ten Miss A---'s. However, I have thought it my duty to endeavour to frem the torrent of discouragement, praying the Lord to provide for this poor people a pastor after his own heart, whom the wandering sheep may be willing to hear, and who may bring them to himfelf.

A proposal has lately been made to me, to accompany Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert to the West-Indies. I have weighed the matter: but on one hand, I feel that I have neither zeal, nor grace, nor talents, to expose myself to the temptations and labours of a mission to the West-Indies; and on the other, I believe, that if God calls me thither, the time is not yet come. I wish to be certain, that I am converted myself, before I leave my converted brethren to convert heathens. Pray let me know what you think of this business; if you condemn me to put the sea between us, the command would be a hard one; but I might, possibly, prevail on myself to give you that proof of the deference I pay to your judicious advice.

Give me some account of Mrs. Wesley, and of the god-sather she designs for your little Charles: And, that she may not labour under a deception, tell her how greatly I want wisdom, and add, that I have no more grace than wisdom. If after all she will not reject so unworthy a sponser, remember that I have taken you for a father and adviser, and that the charge will in the end devolve upon you. Adieu. May the plenitude of Christ fill you, and may some drops of that precious oil run from you to me! I. F.

P. S. I have taken possession of my little hired chamber. There I have outward peace, and I wait for that which is within. I was this morning with Lady liuntingdon, who falutes you, and unites with me to fay, that we have need of you to make one in our threefold cord, and to beg you will hasten your return, when Providence permits. Our Conversation was deep and full of the energy of faith on the part of the Countels; as to me, I fat like Saul at the feet of Gamaliel.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir,

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London, April-1759. XXITH a heart bowed down with grief, and eves bathed with tears, occasioned by our late heavy loss, I mean the death of Mr. Walsh. I take my pen to pray you, to intercede for me. What! that fincere, labourous, and zealous fervant of God! Was he faved only as by fire, and was not his prayer heard till the twelfth hour was just expiring? O where shall I appear, I, who am an unprofitable fervant! Would to God, my eyes were fountains of water to weep for my fins! Would to God, I might pass the rest of my days, in crying, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" All is vanity-grace, talents, labours, if we compare

thou art in thy kingdom! I have preached and administered the facrament at West-Street sometimes in the holidays. May God water the poor feed I have fown, and give is

them with the mighty stride we have to take from time into eternity! Lord, remember me now that

fruitfulness, tho' it be only in one foul!

I have lately feen fo much weakness in my heart, both as a minister and a Christian, that I know not which is most to be pitied, the man, the

D 2 believer, believer, or the preacher. Could I, at last, be truly humbled, and continue so always, I should esteem myself happy in making this discovery. I preach merely to keep the chapel open, until God shall send a workman after his own heart. Nos numeri sumus:* This is almost all I can say of myself. If I did not know myself a little better, than I did formerly, I should tell you, that I had ceased altogether from placing any considence in my repentances, &c. &c. but I see my heart is so full of deceit, that I cannot depend on my knowledge of myself.

You are not well.—Are you, then, going to leave us, like poor Walsh? Ahstay, and permit me to go first, that, when my soul shall leave the body, you may commend it to the mercy of my Saviour.

The day Mr. Walsh died, the Lord gave our brethren the spirit of supplication for him, and many unutterable groans were offered up for him at Spittlesields, where I was. Who shall render us the same kind offices? Is not our hour near? O, my God, when thou comest, prepare us, and we shall be ready! You owe your children an elegy upon his death, and you cannot employ your poetic talents on a better subject.

Give me some account of yourself, of my goddaughter, and of Charles. Present my respects to Mrs. Wesley, whom the Lord will strengthen in body and soul, if my prayers ascend to his throne; and believe me your poor brother and servant, soliciting your prayers,

J. F.

London June 1st, 1759.

To the Rev. CHALLES WESLEY.

My dear Brother, or rather, My dear Father,

SUFFER me to complain that you forget us. I

wish my letter may miss you, and that you
may come in person and answer it before it reaches

you. I know what detains you: I approve your prudence, but rejoice not at it. How is your health, that of Mrs. Wesley's, and your little family? The Lord gives me health of body, and, from time to time, I feel strength in my foul. O when shall the witness, who is dead, arise! When shall the Spirit enter into him, and fill him with wisdom, with power, and with love: Pray for me and support my weakness, as much as you I am here, Umbra pro corpore.* I preach as your substitute: Come and fill worthily an office, of which I am unworthy. My pupils return to Cambridge on Monday, and the whole family fets out for Shropshire on the 11th. Shall I not see you, before that time? I have rejected the offer of Dr. Taylor, and have no other temptations than those of a bad heart. That is enough, you will fay; I grant it; but we must fight before we conquer. Pray that my courage may not fail. Come, and the Lord come with you! I am, &c.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Tern, July 19, 1759.

INSTEAD of apologizing for my filence, I will tell you, that I have twenty times endeavoured to break it, but without effect. I will fimply relate the cause of my filence, referring you to the remembrance of your own temptations, for that patience you must exercise to a weak, tempted soul.

This is the fourth fummer that I have been brought hither, in a peculiar manner, to be tempted of the devil in a wilderness; and I have improved so little by my past exercises, that I have not defended myself better than in the first year. Being arrived here, I began to spend my time as I had determined, one part in prayer, and

^{*} A shadow rather than a substance.

The Lord bleffed my devotions, and I advanced from conquering to conquer, leading every thought captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ, when it pleased God to shew me some of the solds of my heart. As I looked for nothing less than such a discovery, I was extremely surprized, so much so, as to forget Christ: You may judge already what was the consequence. A spiritual languor seized on all the powers of my soul; and I suffered myself to be carried away quietly by a current, with the rapidity of which I was unacquainted.

Neither doubt nor despair troubled me for a moment: My temptation took another course. It appeared to me, that God would be much more gloristed by my damnation, that my salvation. It seemed altogether incompatible with the holiness, the justice, and the veracity of the Supreme Being, to admit so stubborn an offender into his presence. I could do nothing but be assonished at the patience of God; and I would willingly have sung those verses of Desbaraux, if I had had strength.

Tonne, frappe, il est temps, rend moi guerre pour guerre, J'adore en perissant la raison qui t'aigrit.

Do not imagine, however, that I was in a state of evangelical repentance; no:—a man who repents desires to be saved, but I desired it not: I was even impatient to go to my own place; and secretly wished, that God would for a moment give me the exercise of his iron sceptre, to break myself to pieces as a vessel to dishonour. A bitter and cruel zeal, against myself, and all the sinners who were with me, filled all my thoughts and all my desires. The devil, who well knew how to improve the opportunity, blew without ceasing, the sparks of some corruptions, which I thought extinguished, or at the point of being so,

till at last the first begun to appear without. This opened my eyes, and I selt it was time to implore succour. It is now eight days since I endeavoured to pray, but almost without success tyesterday, however, as I sang one of your hymns, the Lord listed up my head, and commanded me to sace my enemies. By his grace, I am already conqueror, and I doubt not, that I shall soon be more than conqueror. Although I deserve it not, nevertheless, hold up my hands till all these Amalekites be put to slight.

I am, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, London, Sept. 14, 1759.

Thank you for your speedy answer; and nothing, but the assurance of your speedy arrival, is wanting to make my happiness complete. Your last lines drew tears from my eyes: I cannot wait till your death, to befeech you to give me that benediction of which you speak. I conjure you, in the name of Christ, to give it me, when you read these lines, and to repeat it, as frequently as you think of a poor brother, who needs the prayers of every one, and who cannot part with yours.

I accept, with pleasure, the obliging proposal you make me for the approaching winter; and I entreat you to consider it less as a proposal, than as an engagement into which you have entered, and of which I have a right to solicit the sulfilment. Permit me only to add to it one condition, which is, to make our reading, &c. tend, as much as possible, to that poverty of spirit, which I so greatly

need.

A few days ago, the Lord gave me two or three lessons on that subject; but alas! how have I forgotten them! I saw, I felt, that I was entirely void of wisdom and virtue. I was ashamed of D4 myself,

myfelf, and I could fay with a degree of feeling, which I cannot describe, Nil ago, nil habeo, sum nil; in pulvero ferquo.* I could then fay, what Gregory Lopez was enabled to fay at all times, "There is no man, of whom I have not a better opinion, than of myfelf." I could have placed myself under the feet of the most atrocious sinner, and have acknowledged him for a faint, in comparison of myself. If ever I am humble and patient, if ever I enjoy folid peace of mind, it must be in this very spirit. Ah! why do I not actually find these virtues? Because I am filled with felf-sufficiency, and am possessed by that felfesteem, which blinds me, and hinders me from doing justice to my own demerits. O! pray that the Spirit of Jesus may remove these scales from my eyes for ever, and compel me to retire into my own nothingness.

To what a monstrous idea had you well night given birth! What! the labours of my ministry under you deserve a salary! I, who have done nothing but dishonoured God hitherto, and am not in a condition to do any thing else for the suture! If then, I am permitted to stand in the courts of the Lord's house, is it not for me to make an acknowledgement rather than to receive one. If I ever receive any thing of the Methodist Church, it shall be only as an indigent mendicant receives an alms, without which he would perish. Such were some of the thoughts, which passed thro' my mind, with regard to the proposal you made to me in London; and I doubt, whether my own vanity, or your goodness, will be able to essay.

the impressions they have left.

I have great need of your advice, relative to the letters which I receive one after another from my relations, who unite in their invitations to me, to

^{*} I do nothing, have nothing, am nothing; I crawl in the dust.

return to my own country: One fays, to fettle my affairs there, another, to preach there, a third, to affist him to die, &c. They press me to declare, whether I renounce my family, and the demands I have upon it; and my mother defires, that I will, at least, go and fee her; and commands me to do fo in the strongest terms. What answer shall I make? If she thought, as you do, I should write to her, "Ubi Christiani, ibi patria;"* my mother, my brethren, my fisters, are those who do the will of my Heavenly Father: But she is not in a state of mind to digest fuch an answer: A mother, is a mother long. On the other hand, I have no inclination to yield to their defires, which appear to me merely natural; for I shall lose precious time, and incur expence: My presence is not absolutely necessary to my concerns; and it is more probable that my relations will pervert me to vanity and interest, than that I shall convert them to genuine Christianity. Lastly, I shall have no opportunity to exercise my ministry. Our Swifs ministers, who preach only once a week, will not look upon me with a more favourable eye than the ministers here; and irregular preaching is impracticable, and would only cause me, either to be laid in prison, or immediately banished from the country.

How does your family do? Is the small-pox as far off as the French? And does your wife disquiet herself, while all the nation resumes courage? Salute her from me, and tell her that her brother the captain, who is very well, trains his men as well as he can for her defence. May the Almighty be your defence day and night! What he protects is well protected Permit me to thank you for the sentence from Kempis, with which you close your letter, by returning to you another—

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^{*} Where there are Christians, there is my Country.

"You run no risk in considering yourself as the "wickedest of men; but you are in danger, if you prefer yourself to any one."

I am, &c.

I. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Tern, Oct. 24, 1759.

You has been balanced by the fear that you were not in a condition to write. This last idea prevails so much, that I take my pen, to entreat you, to deliver me from the inquietude which I suffer from your silence. If the gout prevents you from writing, employ the hand of a friend: if you are in the third heaven of contemplation and love, let brotherly love, for a moment, bring you down; if you wander in the desert of temptation, let sympathy unite you to a miserable man, who teels himself undone.

Since my last, I have taken some steps towards the knowledge of myself. If you enquire, what I have learned? I answer, that I am naked of every thing, but pride and unbelief. Yesterday I was scised with the desire of making rhymes, and I versified my thoughts on the present state of my foul in a hymn, the first part of which I now send you. If the poetry does not deserve reading, the language will recal to mind your French.

How does Mrs. Wesley and your little family do? The rumour here is, that the French are at Liverpool. I am glad they do not think of Bristol. Salute the trembling Half of yourself from me, and tell her, how much I rejoice that your quarters have been in safety hitherto; and that my hope is, they will continue so to the end of the war.

May the care you take of your health have the fuccess I wish: And while I wait the event, may

He, who enabled St. Paul to fay, "When I am weak, then am I ftrong," fustain you in all your infirmities, and fill your inward man with his mighty power! At the moment I was going to feal mine, I received your dear letter. You will fee by the hymn, in which I have attempted to paint my heart, that I have at present far other things to do, than to think of going on to perfection, even laying the foundation of the spiritual house; much less, then, can I help forward those who seek it.

I am, &c.

J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Tern, Sept. 29, 1759.

YOUR filence began to make me uneasy, and your letter had well nigh made me draw my pen over one I had written to ask the cause of it. The Lord afflicts you: that is enough to filence every complaint, and I will not open my mouth, except it be to pray the Lord, to enable you and yours to bring forth those fruits of righteousness, which attend the trials of his children. Take care of yourself, for the sake of the Lord's little flock, and for me, who, with all the impatience of brotherly love, reckon every day till I can have the pleasure of embracing you.

If I know any thing of true brotherly love, (of which I often doubt,) it agrees perfectly well with the love of God, as the founds of the different parts in music agree with each other. Their union arises from their just difference; and they please, sometimes, so much the more, as they appear the most opposed. The opposition of sentiments between divine and brotherly love, together with the subordination of the latter, forms that delightful combat in the soul of a believer, that being divided between two, of the apostle, *

which concludes with a facrifice of refignation, of which the natural man is not capable. Your expression, "Spread the moral sense all o'er," gives me an idea of that charity, which I seek. The love of Gregory Lopez appears to me too soical: I do not find in it that vehement desire, those tears of love, that ardour of seeing and possessing each other in the bowels of Jesus Christ, which I find so frequently in the Epistles of St. Paul. If this sensibility be a failing, I do not wish to be exempt from it. What think you?

When I was reading Telemachus with my pupils I was struck with this expression, "He blushed to have been born with so little feeling for men, and to appear to them fo inhuman." I easily applied the first part, and the son of Ulysses gave me an example of Christian repentance, which I wish to follow, till my heart is truly circumcifed. Send me fome remedy, or give me some advice against this hardness of heart under which I groan. Apropos—concerning hardness of heart; what you fay about reducing a mother to despair, has made me recollect what I have often thought, that the particular fault of the Swiss is to be without natural affection. With respect to that preference which my mother shews me above her other children, I fee clearly, that I am indebted for almost all the affection she expresses for me in her letters, to my absence from her, which hinders her from feeing my faults. Nevertheless, I reproach myself severely, that I cannot interest myself in her welfare, as much as I did in that of my deceased father; and I am astonished at the difference. I believe the time is not yet come, when my presence may be of service to her, and I flatter myself she will not be shocked a my refusal, which I have softened as much as I could.

I fear you did not rightly understand what I wrote about the propofal you made me at London. So far from making conditions, I feel my elf unworthy of receiving them. Be it what it may, I thank God, that I trouble myself with no temporal things; my only fear is that of having too much, rather than too little of the things necessary for life. I am weary of abundance: I could wish to be poor with my Saviour; and those, whom he hath chosen to be rich in faith, appear to me objects of envy in the midst of their wants. Happy should I be, if a secret pride of heart did not disguise itself under these appearances of humility! Happy should I be if that dangerous ferpent did not conceal himself under these sweet flowers, and feed on their juices!

I am, &c. J. F.

To Mrs. Royon and Miss Furley.

My dear Sisters, OSt. 1, 1759.

Have put off writing to you, lest the action of A writing should divert my foul from the awful and delightful worship it is engaged in. But I now conclude, I shall be no loser, if I invite you to love Him, my foul loveth, to dread Him my foul dreadeth, to adore Him my foul adoreth. Sink with me, or rather, let me fink with you. before the throne of grace; and while cherubims veil their faces, and cry out in tender fear and exquifite trembling, Holy! holy! let us put our mouths in the dust, and echo back the folemn found, Holy! holy! Let us plunge ourselves into that ocean of purity. Let us try to fathom the depths of divine mercy; and, convinced of the impossibility of such an attempt, let us lose ourselves in them. Let us be comprehended by God, if we cannot comprehend him. Let us be supremely happy in God. Let the intenseness of our happiness border on misery, because

cause we can make him no return. Let our head become water, and our eyes fountains of tears,—
tears of humble repentance, of solemn joy, of filent admiration, of exalted adoration, of raptured desires, of inflamed transports, of speechless awe. My God, and my all!—Your God, and your all! Our God, and our all! Praise him; and with our souls blended in one by divine love, let us with "one mouth glorify the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;—our Father, who is over all,

thro' all, and in us all."

I charge you before the Lord Jesus Christ, who giveth life, and more abundant life; I entreat you, by all the actings of faith, the exertions of hope, the flames of love, you ever felt, sink to greater depths of self-abasing repentance, and rife to greater heights of Christ-exalting joy. And let him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, more than you can ask or think, carry on and fulfil in you the work of faith with power; with that power, whereby he subdueth all things to himself. "Be stedfast in hope," immoveable in patience and love, always abounding in the outward and inward labour of love, and "receive the end of your faith, the salvation of your fouls.

I am, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, London, Nov. 15, 1759.

YOUR letter was not put into my hand till eight days after my arrival in London. I carried the enclosed agreeably to its address, and passed three hours with a modern prodigy,—an humble and pious Countess. I went with trembling, and in obedience to your orders; but I soon perceived a little of what the disciples felt, when Christ said to them, "It is I, be not afraid." She proposed to me something of what you hinted to me in your garden; namely, to celebrate the communion.

communion fometimes at her house in a morning. and to preach when occasion offered; in such a manner, however, as not to restrain my liberty, nor prevent my affifting you, or preaching to the French Refugees; and that, only till Providence should clearly point out the path in which I should go. Charity, politeness, and reason, accompanied her offer; and I confess, in spite of the resolution, which I had almost absolutely formed, to fly the houses of the great, without even the exception of the Countefs's, I found myfelf fo greatly changed, that I should have accepted, on the spot, a proposal, which I should have declined from any other mouth; but my engagement with you withheld me; and thanking the Countels, I told her, when I had reflected on her obliging offer, I would do myfelf the honour of waiting upon her again.

Nevertheless, two difficulties stand in my way. Will it be consistent with that poverty of spirit, which I seek? Can I accept an office, for which I have such small talents; and, shall I not dishonour the cause of God, by stammering out the mysteries of the gospel, in a place, where the most approved ministers of the Lord have preached with so much power, and so much success? I suspect that my own vanity gives more weight to this second objection, than it deserves to have:

What think you?

I give myself up to your judicious counsels; you take the unnecessary pains to assure me, that they are disinterested; for I cannot doubt it. I feel myself unworthy of them; much more still of the appellation of friend, with which you honour me. You are an indulgent father to me, and the name of son suits me better than that of brother.

You ask, "Whether I can, with confidence, give you up to the mercy of God?" Yes, I can; and I feel that for you, which I do not for myself;

myfelf; I am so assured of your salvation, that I ask no other place in heaven, than that I may have at your feet. I doubt even if Paradise would be a Paradise to me, unless it were shared with you; and the single idea which your question excited, that we might one day be separated, pierced my heart, and bathed my eyes with tears. They were sweet tears, which seemed to water and confirm my hope, or rather the certainty I have, that He, who hath begun a good work in us, will also sinish it; and unite me to you in Christ, by the bonds of an everlasting love; and not only to you, but to your children and your wise, whom I salute in Christ. Adieu. I am, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Dunstable, March 1, 1760. If Have had a pleasant journey as to my body, but an unhappy one for my soul. Every thing required that I shoul cry without ceasing, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner;" but, alas; I have not done so. The fine weather invites me to execute a design I had half formed, of making a forced march to spend next Sunday at Everton, Mr. Berridge's parish. There may the voice of the Lord be heard by a poor child of Adam, who, like him, is still behind the trees of his stupidity and impenitence!

If I do not lose myself across the sields before I get there, and if the Lord is pleased to grant me the spirit of supplication, I will pray for you and your dear sister at P——, until I can again pray with you. Do not forget me, I beseech you, if the Lord brings me to your remembrance. Cast your bread on the waters on my behalf, and, perhaps you will find it again after many days. I would fain be with you on those solemn oceasions, when a thousand voices are raised to Heaven to

obtain those graces, which I have not: But God's will be done!

Do not forget to present my respects to the Countels. If I continue any time at Everton, shall take the liberty of giving her some account of the work of God in those parts; if not, I will give it her in person. Adieu. The Lord strengthen you in soul and body.

I am, &c. J. F.

To the Hon. Mrs.

My dear Friend,

O a believer, Jesus is alone the desirable, the everlasting distinction and honour of men. All other advantages, tho' now fo proudly extolled, fo vehemently coveted, are, like the down on the thiftle, blown away in a moment, and never fecure to the possessor. Riches are incapable of fatisfying, friends are changeable and precarious, the dear relations, who are the delight of our heart, are taken away at a ftroke; - pain and fickness follow ease and health in quick succession; but, amidst all the possible changes of life, Christ is a rock. To see him by faith, to lay hold, to rely upon him, to live upon him, this is the refuge from the storm, the shadow from the heat.—May it be given to you abundantly! And in order to obtain it, nothing more or less is required of you, than a full and frequent confession of your own abominable nature and heart, then kneeling as a true beggar at the door of mercy, declaring you came there expecting notice and relief, only because Christ our Saviour came to redeem incarnate devils, and, for the glory of his grace, to convert them into faints and fervants of the living God, into children of God and heirs of Glory.

I think you take a fure method to perplex yourfelf, if you want to fee your own faith, or look for one moment at yourself for proof of your faith; others must fee it in your works, but you

must

must feel it in your heart. The glory of Jesus is now, by faith, realized to the mind, in some such manner as an infinitely grand and beautiful object, which appears in the firmament of heaven: It arrells and fixes the attention of the spectators on itself; it captivates them, and, by the pleasure it imparts, they are led on to view it: So when Jelus is our peace, strength, righteousness, food, falvation, and our all, we are penetrated with a consciousness of it.-We should never rest short of this feeling, nor ever think we have it ftrong enough. This is to keep the faith; and our chief conflict and most constant labour must be against our own heart, the things of the world, and the fuggestions of our great enemy, who are all intent to divert us from this One Object, which Mary placed herfelf before; or to make us doubt whether in the life and death of Immanuel there was fuch unfearchable riches and efficacy, fuch a complete falvation for all his people, or whether we are in that number. For my own part, I am often tempted to suspect, whether I am not speaking great swelling words of Christ, and yet am no more than founding brafs or a tinkling cymbal: and I find the only fuccessful way of answering this doubt is immediately to address to Jesus a prayer to this effect-" Whofoever cometh to " thee thou wilt in no wife cast out; Lord, have " not I come to thee? Am not I, as a brand " plucked out of the fire, depending upon thee 44 for life? See if there be any way of wicked-" ness in me, and lead me in the way everlast-" ing."

My eye looks to the bleffed Jesus, my heart longs to be more in his service, my love—O that were greater toward him! I mourn deeply for my corruptions, which are many and great. When I look at Him, and contemplate his great salvation, I admire, I adore, and, in some measure, I

love:

love: but when I look at myself, my heart rifes at the fight: -Black and devilifh, felfish and proud, carnal and covetous, and most abominably unclean, I want all things which are good. But I have a bleffed, bleffed Lord, Christ Jesus, in whom all fulness dwells for me, and for the dear friend to whom I am writing; a fulnefs of Pardon, wisdom, holiness, strength, peace, righteourness and falvation;—a fulness of love, mercy, goodness, truth: All this, and a thousand times more than all this, without any worthiness or merit, only for receiving. O bleffed free grace of God! O bleffed be his name for Jesus Christ! What a gift! and for whom? For you my dear friend, if you are without ftrength, if you are in your nature an enemy, all this is for you. What fays the everlasting God? Believe, that he gave his Son for finners; and, as a finrer, believe in Jesus. He came to fave the lost; then, as a lost foul, believe in him. He came to cleanfe the filthy: then, as a filthy foul, believe in him. And why should we not thus believe? Can God lie? Impossible! Can we have a better foundation to build on, than the promise and oath of God?

My dear friend, I know you will not be angry at my preachment; I aim it all at my own heart; I stand more in need of it than you. I always feel my heart refreshed when I am talking or thinking of Jesus. It is a feast to my finful soul, when I am meditating on the glories which compose his blessed name But O how dark and ignorant, how little, how exceeding little, do I know of him! O, thou light of the world, enlighten my soul! Teach me to know more of thy infinite and unsearchable riches, thou great God-man, that I may love thee with an increasing love, and serve thee with an increasing zeal, till

thou bringest me to glory!

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

Tern, Sept. 26, 1760.

YOU answer me not, my dear Sir: Have you not received my last, with a letter enclosed from my Lady Huntingdon? But it is with an ill grace I complain, when I ought rather to thank you for the consolatory letter, which you wrote me in answer to my first from Tern. It might have comforted me, if I would, or could be comforted without Jesus; but I only ask strength to groan on, till I can say, Totus mihi perplacet Christus.* Without the experience of this motto, your will never raise me above a Devil, who can say as well as me, Totus displiced mihi.

I fend you here the copy of a part of a letter, which I have just written to Lady Huntingdon. The light I expected from our friend at Bristol " is come, though from a different quarter. A fortnight ago, the Minister of this parish, with " whom I have had no connection for these two e years, fent me word, (I know not why) that " his pulpit should be at my service at any time, " and feems now very friendly. Some days after, "I ventured, without defign, a vifit of civility to the Vicar of a neighbouring parish, who fell out with me, three years ago, for preaching " faith in his church: He received me with the et greatest kindness, and said often, he would " have me take care of fouls fome where or other. " Last Sunday, the Vicar of Madeley, to whom " I was formerly curate, coming to pay a visit " here expressed great regard for me, seemed to be " quite reconciled, and affured me, that he would " do all that was in his power to ferve me; of " which he yesterday gave me a proof, by sending " me a testimonial unasked. He was no sooner

^{*} Christ is altogether lovely.

⁺ I am altogether hateful to myfelf.

" gone, than news was brought that the old Cler-" gyman, I mentioned to your Ladyship, died " fuddenly the day before; and that fame day be-" fore I heard it, Mr. Hill, meeting at the races " his nephew who is patron of Madeley, told " him, that, if he would present me to Madeley. " he would give the Vicar of that parish the liv-" ing vacated by the old Clergyman's death. "This was immediately agreed to, as Mr. Hill " himself informed me in the evening, wishing " me joy. This new promise, the manner in which Mr. Hill forced me from London to be " here at this time, and the kindness of the three " Ministers I mentioned, whose hearts seemed to " be turned to this juncture, to fign my testi-" monials for institution, are so many orders to " be still, and wait till the door is quite open or fhut. I beg, therefore, your Ladyship would " present my respects and thanks to Lady Marga-" ret and Mr. Ingham, and acquaint them with " the necessity, which these circumstances lay me " under to follow the leadings of Providence."

This answer is agreeable to the advice you have fo repeatedly given me, not to refift Providence, but to follow its leadings. I am, however, inwardly in suspence; my heart revolts at the idea of being here alone, opposed by my superiors, hated by my neighbours, and despised by all the Without piety, without talents, without resolution, how shall I repel the assaults, and surmount the obstacles which I foresee, if I discharge my duty at Madeley with fidelity? On the other hand, to reject this prefentation, to burn this certificate, and to leave in the defert the sheep, whom the Lord has evidently brought me into the world to feed, appears to me nothing but obstinacy and refined felf love. I will hold a middle course between these extremes: I will be wholly passive In the steps I must take, and active in praying the Lord to deliver me from the evil one, and to conduct me in the way he would have me to go.

If you see any thing better, inform me of it speedily; and, at the same time, remember me in all your prayers, that if this matter be not of the Lord, the enmity of the Bishop of Litchfield, who must countersign my testimonials, the threats of the Chaplain of the Bishop of Hereford, who was a witness to my preaching at West-street, the objections drawn from my not being naturalized, or some other obstacle, may prevent the kind intentions of Mr. Hill. Adieu.

I am, &c. J F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, March 10, 1761.

If thank you for your elegy on Dr. M—n. It is pathetic and truly christian. As I read it, I could not refrain my tears;—tears, so much the more sweet, as they originated in a secret hope, that I should one day strip off the polluted rags of my own righteousness, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ, like the Christian hero of your poem.

I feel more and more, that I neither abide in Christ, nor Christ in me; nevertheless, I do not so feel it, as to feek him without intermission. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this heart of unbelief? Blessed be God, who has promised me this deliverance, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ!

My new convert has with great difficulty, escaped the wiles of the Devil; who, by fifty visions, had set her on the pinnacle of the temple. Thanks be to God, she has come down, without being cast headlong. I have had more trouble with her visions, than with her unbelief. Two other persons, profess, that they have received the consolations of divin: love: I wait for their fruits.

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A few days ago, I was violently tempted to quit Madeley: The spirit of Jonah had so seized upon my heart, that I had the insolence to murmur against the Lord; but the storm is now happily calmed, at least for a season. Alas! what stubbornness is there in the will of man; and with what strength does it combat the will of God under the mask of piety, when it can no longer do fo with the uncovered, shameless face of vice! If a man bridleth not his tongue all his outward religion is vain. May we not add to this observation of St. James, that if a man bridleth not his will, which is the language of his defires, his inward religion is vain also? The Lord does not, however, leave me altogether; and I have often a fecret hope, that he will one day touch my heart and my lips with a live coal from the altar; and that then his word shall consume the stubble, and break to pieces the stone.

The question which you mean to repeat at the end of the Winter, is, I hope, Whether you shall be welcome at Madeley? My answer is, You shall be welcome even before Winter: For I have already lost all my reputation, and the little that remains does not deserve a competition with the pleasure I shall have in seeing you. Farewell.

Your's, J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, April 27, 1761.

I Have just received your letter, which at once fills me with pleasure, and covers me with shame. You kindly cast a veil over my faults, instead of exposing them as they deserve. This, generous conduct will, if I am not incorrigible, help to cure me of, what you style my imprudent simplicity, but what I call by its proper title of stupid ingratitude: But what do I say?—nothing

can cure me, but a lively faith in that Jesus, who is made to us, of the Father, wisdom: O that

he were my wisdom!

When I first came to Madeley, I was greatly mortified and discouraged by the smallness-of my congregations; and I thought that if some of our triends at London had feen my little company, they would have triumphed in their own wisdom; but now, thank God, things are altered in that respect, and last Sunday, I had the pleasure of feeing fome in the church-yard, who could not get into the church. I began a few Sundays ago to preach in the afteroon after catechizing the children; but I do not preach my own fermons. Twice I read a fermon of Archbishop Usher's, and last Sunday one of the homilies, taking the liberty to make fome observations on such passages as confirmed what I advanced in the morning: And by this means I stopped the mouth of many adversaries.

I have frequently had a defire to exhort in Madeley Wood and Coalbrook Dale, two villages of my parish; but I have not dared to run before I faw an open door. It now, I think, begins to open; two small focieties of about twenty persons have formed of themselves in those places, altho' the devil feems determined to over turn all. A young person, the daughter of one of my rich parishioners, has been thrown into despair: So that every body thought her infane, and indeed, I thought fo too. Judge how our adversaries rejoiced; and for my part, I was tempted to forfake my ministry, and take to my heels: I never suffered such affliction. Last Saturday I humbled myself before the Lord, on her account, by fasting and prayer; and, I hope, that the Lord has heard my prayer. She found herself well enough to come to church yesterday. You will do well to engage your colliers at Kingswood to pray for their poor brethren at Madeley.

Madeley: May those of Madeley, one day, equal them in faith, as they now do in that wickedness, for which they were famous before you went among them.

Mr. Hill has written me a very obliging letter, to engage me to accompany the eldest of my pupils to Switzerland; and if I had any other country than the place where I am, I should perhaps, have been tempted to go. At present, however, I have no temptation that way, and I have declined the offer, as politely as I could.

I am, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, Aug. 19, 1761.

Have at length received your letter, for which I thank you with all my heart. I fear you give yourfelf up to melancholy, on account of your ill state of health; or, at least, that you do not rejoice with a joy full of glory, at the remembrance of that glory which Christ has purchased for you. I yet hope that we shall both see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, and that his providence will bring our bodies nearer to each other, at the same time that his grace unites our spirits in Christ Jesus.

I do not know whether I mentioned to you a fermon preached at the Archdeacon's visitation. It was almost all levelled at the points which are called the doctrines of Methodism, and as the preacher is Minister of a parish near mine, it is probable he had me in his eye. After the sermon, another Clergyman addressed me with an air of triumph, and demanded what answer I could make. As several of my parishioners were present, besides the churchwardens, I thought it my duty to take the

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matter up; and I have done so, by writing a long letter to the preacher, in which I have touched the principal mistakes of his discourse, with as Vol. 1X.

much politeness and freedom as I was able; but I have as yet had no answer. I could have wished for your advice before I sealed my letter; but as I could not have it, I have been very cautious, intrenching myself behind the ramparts of scripture, as well as those of our homilies and articles.

I know not what to fay to you of the state of my foul: I daily struggle in the Slough of Defpond, and I endeavour every day to climb the hill Difficulty. I need wisdom, mildness and courage; and no man has less of them than I. O Jesus, my Saviour, draw me strongly to Him, who giveth wifdom to all who ask it, and upbraideth them not! As to the state of my parish, the prospect is yet discouraging. New scandals fucceed those that wear away; but offences must come: Happy shall I be, if the offence cometh not by me! My churchwardens speak of hindering strangers from coming to the church, and of repelling them from the Lord's table; but on thefe points, I am determined to make head against them. A club of eighty workmen in a neighbouring parish, being offended at their minister, determined to come in procession to my church, and requested me to preach a fermon for them; but I thought proper to decline it, and have thereby a little regained the good graces of the minister, at least, for a time.

Farewell, J. F.

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To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, Oct. 12, 1761.

MOU have always the goodness to encourage me, and your encouragements are not unseafonable; for discouragements follow one after another with very little intermission. Those which are of an inward nature are sufficiently known to you; but some others are peculiar to myself, especially, those I have had for eight days

days past, during Madeley wake. Seeing that I could not suppress these Bacchanals, I did all in my power to moderate their madness; but my endeavours have had little or no effect: The impotent dyke I opposed, only made the torrent swell and foam, without stopping its course. You cannot well imagine how much the animosity of my parishioners is heightened, and with what boldness it discovers itself against me, because I preached against drunkenness, shows, and bull-baiting. The publicans and maltmen will not forgive me: They think, that to preach against drunkenness, and to cut their purse, is the same

thing.

My church begins not to be fo well filled as it has been, and I account for it by the following reasons. The curiofity of some of my hearers is fatisfied, and others are offended by the word; the roads are worse, and if it shall ever please the Lord to pour his Spirit upon us, the time is not yet come: For instead of faying, "Let us go up together to the house of the Lord," they exclaim, "Why should we go and hear a Methodift? I should lose all patience with my flock, if I had not more reason to be satisfied with them, than with myself. My own barrenness furnishes me with excuses for theirs; and I wait the time, when God shall give feed to the fower, and increase to the feed fown. In waiting that time, I learn the meaning of this prayer, "Thy will be done!" Believe me your fincere, tho' J. F. unworthy friend,

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, May 16, 1762.

Have received your letter giving me the melancholy information of your daughter Sukey's death. What shall I say to you on the subject?

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You know too well the dangers of that world, from which the Lord has recalled her, to repine at the premature felicity into which she has entered. We are yet in the vale of tears and miferies, but God has wiped away all tears from her eyes; let us then dry our eyes as well as we can, and hasten to follow her. I hope that fatigue and grief will not wholly cast down Mrs. Wesley. Salute her from me, and tell her, I would with all my foul bear a part of her burden. Why do I fay a part? The Lord Jesus is ready to take upon him the whole. Let us go to him, bowed down under the weight of our temporal and spiritual afflictions, and we shall find that rest, which he has purchased for us at so great a price. Let us not forget to mingle our thankfgivings with our fighs. "The one shall be taken, (faith the Lord,) and the other shall be left." Blessed be his holy name, his mercy still triumphs over his justice!

Since my last, our troubles have increased. A young man having put in force the act for suppressing swearing, against a parish officer, he stirred up all the other half gentlemen, to remove him from the parish. Here I interposed, and to do so with effect, I took the young man into my fervice. By God's grace, I have been enabled to conduct myself, in this manner, so as to give them no handle against me, and, in spite of all their

cabals, I have got the better.

What has greatly encouraged them, is the behaviour of a magistrate, who was at the first inclined to favour me, but afterwards turned against me with peculiar malevolence, and proceeded so far as to threaten me, and all my slock of the Rock Church * with imprisonment. Hitherto the Lord

^{*} The Rock Church were a company of well disposed people, who assembled for hearing the word and prayer, at a small house built upon a rock, in Madeley Wood.

has stood by me, and my little difficulties are nothing to me; but I fear I support them rather like a philosopher, than a Christian. We were to have been mobbed with a drum last Tuesday at the Rock Church; but their captain, a papift, behaved himself so very ill, that they were ashamed of him, and are made peaceable for the present. Ask of God to give me wisdom, resolution, and love. The Lord give you a profperous journey. Adieu. I am, &e.

To the Rev. CHARLES WESLEY.

Madeley, July, 1762.

TOUR letter, my dear Sir, arrived some days too late, to prevent my taking a falle step respecting the papists in question. Three weeks ago, I went to Ludlow to the Bishop's visitation, and I thought the occasion favourable for my purpose; but the churchwardens, when we were upon the fpot, refused to support me, and the court has paid no regard to my presentation. Thus I have gained fome experience, tho' at my own cost. The fermon did not touch the string with which I was whipped the last visitation, and I afterwards had the boldness to go and dine with the Bishop.

Many of my parishioners are strangely disconcerted at my bringing my gown back from Ludlow. With respect to the magistrate I mentioned, who because he acted as Judge of the circuit two years ago, believes himself as able a lawyer as Judge Foster; he, for the present, contents himfelf with threatenings. I met him the other day, and after he had called me Jesuit, &c.; and menaced me with his cane, affured me again, that he would foon put down our assemblies. How

ridiculous is this impotent rage!

I have attempted to form a fociety, and in spite of much opposition and many difficulties, I hope

by God's grace to succeed. I preach, I exhort, I pray, &c. but as yet I feem to have cast the net on the wrong side of the ship. Lord Jesus come thyself, and furnish me with a divine commission! For some months past, I have laboured under an insuperable drowsiness: I could sleep day and night; and the hours which I ought to employ with Christ on the mountain, I spend like

Peter in the garden,

I congratulate you on your fafe arrival in London. May the Lord strengthen you in foul and body; may he fill you with wisdom and patience! Certainly, you need much of both, to pull up the tares without rooting up the wheat. I approve your design of examining the state of things for yourself, before you engage in the business. May the Lord bless the productions of your body and those of your mind: May your little family and your books appear in the world, under the most distinguished protection of the Most High! Adieu. Pray for me. I am, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, Aug. 1762.

Have received your last, and I rejoice that Dr. Turner, by whose skill the Lord once brought me up from the grave, has undertaken your cure. May he have the same success with you, that he had with me; but, be that as it will, our comfort is to know, that God will do all for the best.

I have still trials of all forts. First, spiritual ones. My heart is hard: I have not that contrition, that filial fear, that sweet, humble melting of heart before the Lord, which I consider

as effential to spiritual Christianity.

Secondly, the opposition made to my ministry increases. A young Clergyman, who lives in Madeley Wood, where he has great influence, has openly

openly declared war against me, by pasting on the church door a paper, in which he charges me with rebellion, schism, and being a disturber of the public peace. He puts himself at the head of the gentlemen of the parish, (as they term themfelves) and supported by the Recorder of Wenlock, he is determined to put in force the Conventicle Act against me. A few weeks ago, the widow who lives in the Rock Church, and a young man, who read and prayed in my absence, were taken up. I attended them before the justice, and the young clergyman with his troop were present. They called me Jesuit, &c. and the justice tried to frighten me, by faying, " that he would put the act in force, tho' we should assem-ble only in my own house." I pleaded my cause as well as I could, but feeing he was determined to hear no reason, I told him, " he must do as he pleased, and that if the Act in question concerned us, we were rea 'y to fuffer all its rigours." In his rage, he went the next day to Wenlock, and proposed to grant a warrant to have me apprehended; but, as the other justices were of opinion, that the business did not come under their cognizance, but belonged to the Spiritual Court, he was obliged to swallow his spittle Mr. Madan, whom I have confulted, tells me, the Act may be enforced against the mistress of the house, the young man, and all who were present. The churchwardens talk of putting me in the Spiritual Court, for meeting in houses, &c. But what is worst of all, three false witnesses offer to prove upon oath, that I am a liar; and fome of my followers (as they are called) have difhonoured their profession, to the great joy of our adversaries.

In the midst of these difficulties, I have reason to bless the Lord that my heart is not troubled. Forget me not in your prayers. Yours, J. F. E.

To Mr. VAUGHAN.

Dear Sir, Madeley, Sept. 4, 1762.

Am veryiglad to hear your delight is still in the ways of the Lord, and, I trust, you will never stop till you find them all pleasantness to you. Fight the good sight of faith; break thro' all temptations, dejections, wandering, worldly thoughts; thro' all unprositable companions, and the backwardness of an unbelieving heart, and carnal mind: Struggle, I say, until you touch Jesus, and feel healing, comforting virtue, proceeding from him; and when you know clearly the way to him, repeat the touch, till you find he lives in you, by the powerful operation of his loving Spirit. Then you will say, with St. Paul, I live the life of God, yet not I, but Christ who liveth in me.

I rejoice that you enquire, where Christ maketh his slock to rest at noon. The rest from the guilt, and power of sin, you will find only in inward boliness: And this I apprehend to consist in, what St. Paul calls, the kingdom of God:—righteausness, which excludes all guilt; peace, which banishes all fear that hath torment; and joy, which can no more subsist with doubts, anxiety, and unstableness of mind, than light can subsist with darkness. That there is a state, wherein this kingsom is set up, sirmly set up in the heart, you may see from our Lord's sermon on the mount, by his priestly prayer in St. John, by the Epistle of that Apostle, and various parts of the Epistles of St. Paul and St. James.

To aim aright at this liberty of the children of God, requires a continual acting of faith—of a naked faith in a naked promise, such as, "The Son of God was manifested to Destroy the works of the devil—The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the

law of fin and death—I can do ALL things, thro' Christ, who strengtheneth me." By a naked faith in a naked promise, I do not mean a bare assent, that God is saithful, and that such a promise in the book of God may be suffilled in me; but a bold, hearty, steady venturing of my soul, body, and spirit, upon the truth of the promise, with an appropriating act. It is mine, because I am a sinner; and I am determined to believe, come what will. Here you must shut the eye of carnal reason, and stop the ear of the mind to the reasonings of the serpent; which, were you to reason with him, would be endless, and would soon draw you out of the simple way of that saith, by which we are both justified and sanctified.

You must also remember, that it is your privilege to go to Christ, by such a faith now, and every succeeding moment; and that you are to bring nothing, but -a careless, distracted, tossed, hardened heart;—just such a one, as you have now. Here lies the grand mistake of many poor miserable, but precious souls: they are asraid to believe, lest it should be presumption, because they have not as yet comfort, joy, love, &c.; not considering, that this is to look for fruit, before the tree is planted. Beware, then, of looking for any grace, previous to your believing; and let

The Lord make you wife as a ferpent, and harmless as the loving dove; but beware of the ferpent's food, dust, and the dove's bane, birdlime, worldly cares. O, my friend, what is the world?

A flying shadow. As we fly thro' it, let us lose ourselves in the Eternal Substance. Farewell in the Lord.

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in the Lord.

Yours, J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

Madeley, Sept. 20, 1762-My dear Sir, T is well for me, I have not an implicit faith I in your half promises of coming to see me. I am forry that my delay has furnished you with an apology; but comfort myfelf still with the idea, that you will not wholly deprive me of the pleafure of embracing you; and that your vifit is only

postponed for a little season.

"The Crede quod habes et habes" * is not very different from those words of Christ, "What things foever ye defire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." † The humble reason of the believer, and the irrational presumption of the enthusiast, draw this doctrine to the right hand or to the left. But to split the hair,-here lies the difficulty. I have told you that I am no party man; I am neither for nor against the witness for Christian Perfection, without examination. I complain of those who deceive themselves; I honour those who do honour to their profession; and I wish we could find out the right way of reconciling the most profound humility with the most lively hopes of grace. I think you infift on the one, and Maxfield on the other; and I believe you both fincere in your views. God blefs you both, and, if either of you goes too far, may the Lord bring him back.

Truly, you are a pleasant casuist. What! "It " hath pleafed thee to regenerate this infant with 46 thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own " child by adoption, and to incorporate him into "thy holy church"—Does all this fignify nothing more, "than being taken into the visible church?"

How came you to think of my going to leave

^{*} Believe that you have it, and you have it. † Mark xi. 24.

Madeley? I have, indeed, had my scruples about the above passage and some in the burial service; but you may dismiss your fears, and be assured I will neither marry, nor leave my church, without advising with you. Adieu.

Your affectionate brother, J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madam, Madeley, Nov. 1, 1762.

Thank you for the confidence you repose in the advice of a poor fellow sinner: May the Father of lights direct you through so vile an instrument! If you build all your hopes of heaven upon Jesus Christ in all his offices, you do not build without a foundation, but upon the true one.

That there is a feal of pardon, and an earnest of our inheritance above, which you are as yet a stranger to, seems clear from the tenour of your letter; but had I been in the place of the Gentleman you mention, I would have endeavoured to lay it before you, "as the fruit of faith," and a most glorious privilege, rather than "as the root of faith," and a thing absolutely necessary to the being of it.

I believe many people know, when they receive faith, and all people, when they receive the feal of their pard n: When they "believe in Christ," they are justified in the fight of God; and when they " are scaled by the Spirit," they are fully assured of that justification in their own conscience. Some receive faith, and the feal of their purdon in the same instant, as the jailor, &c.; but most receive faith sirst, as the dying thief, the woman of Canan, David, the people of Samaria,* and the faithful at Ephesus.† Suppose then God gave you faith, i. e. a hearty trust in the blood of

* Ads viii. 12-16. † Eph. i. 12.

Christ, and a fincere closing with him, as your righteousness and your all, while you received the facrament, (which feems to me very probable, by the account you gave me,) your way is exceeding plain before you. Hold fast your confidence, but do not trust, nor rest in it; trust in Christ, and remember he fays, "I am the way;" not for you to stop, but to run on in him. Rejoice to hear, that there is a full affurance of faith to be obtained by the feal of God's Spirit, and go on from faith to faith, until ou are poffeffed of it. But remember this, and let this double advice prevent your straying to the right or left-First, that you will have reason to sufpect the fincerity of your zeal, if you lie down easy without the feal of your pardon, and the full essurance of your faith. Secondly, while you wait for that seal in all the means of grace, beware of being unthankful for the least degree of faith and confidence in Jesus; beware of burying one talent, because you have not five; beware of despising the grain of mustaid seed, because it is not yet a tree.

May the Lord teach you the middle path, between resting short of the happiness of "making your calling and election sure," and supposing you are neither called nor chosen, and that God hath not yet truly begun the good work. You can never be too bold in believing, provided you assist state of the faith "as a cloak for sin." The Lord despites not the day of small things; only beware of resting in small things, and look for the seal and abiding witness of God's Spirit, according to the sollowing direction,

"Restless, resigned, for this I wait, For this my vehement soul stands still."

As to deep fights of the evil of fin, the mere

you go on, the more you will fee Christ exceeding lovely, and fin exceeding finful: Therefore look up to Jesus, as a vile and helpless sinner, pleading his promises: This is going on, and trust him for the rest

With respect to myself, in many conflicts and troubles of foul, I have confulted many masters of the spiritual life; but divine mercy did not, does not, fusier me to rest upon the word of a fellow creature. The best advices have often increafed my perplexities; and the end was, to make me cease from human dependance, and wait upon God from the dust of felf despair. To him, therefore, I delire to point you and myfelf, in the person of Jesus Christ. This incarnate God receives weary, perplexed finners still, and gives them folid reft. He teaches, as no man ever taught; his words have spirit and life; nor can he possibly mistake our case. I am, Madam, your fellow fervant in the patience and kingdom of Jefus.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, Nov. 22, 1762.

THE debates about the illegality of exhorting in houses (altho' only in my own parish,) grew some time ago to such a height, that I was obliged to lay my reasons before the Bishop; but his Lordship very prudently sends me no answer. I think he knows not how to disapprove, and yet dares not approve this methodistical way of procedure.

Brother Ley arrived fafe here yesterday, and confirms the melancholy news of many of our brethren overshooting sober and steady Christianity in London. I feel a great deal for you and the Church, in these critical circumstances. O that I could stand in the gap! O that I could, by facrisicing

- Tacrificing myfelf, thut this immense abyss of en-

thufiafm, which opens its mouth among us!

The corruption of the best things is always the worst of corruptions. Going into an extreme of this nature, or only winking at it, will give an eternal fanction to the vile afperfions cast, on all fides, on the purest doctrines of Christianity: And we shall fadly overthrow—overthrow, in the worst maner, what we have endeavoured to build

for many years.

The nearer the parts that mortify are to the heart, the more speedily is an amputation to be refolved upon. You will fay, perhaps, "But what if the heart itself is attacked?" Then, let the heart be plucked out as well as the right eve. Was not Abraham's heart bound up in the life of Isaac? Yet he believed, that if he offered him up, God was able to restore him, even from the dead: And was not God better to him than his

hopes?

I have a particular regard for M— and B—: both of them are my correspondents: I am strongly prejudiced in favour of the witnesses, and do not willingly receive what is faid against them; but allowing that what is reported is one half mere exaggeration, the tenth part of the rest shews that spiritual pride, presumption, arrogance, stubbornness, party spirit, uncharitableness, prophetic mistakes; - in short, that every finew of enthusiasm is now at work in many of that body. I do not credit any one's bare word, but I ground my fentiments on B - 's own letters.

May I prefume unasked to lay before you my mite of observation. If I had it in my power to overlock the matter, as you have, would it be wrong in me calmly to fit down with fome unprejudiced friends, and lovers of both parties, and fix with them the marks and symptoms of enthusiasm; then insist, at first, in love, and after-

wards.

wards, if necessary, with all the weight of my authority, upon those who have them, or plead for them, either to stand to the sober rule of Chris-

tianity, or openly to depart from us?

Fear not, dear Sir; the Lord will take care of the ark; and tho' hundreds of Uzziahs should fall off, most of them would return with Noah's dove. Have faith in the word, and leave the rest to Providence. "The Lord will provide," is a comfortable motto for a believer. I am, with most hearty prayers that God would fill you more than ever, with wisdom, steadiness, meekness, and fortitude, Rev. and dear Sir, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, Jan. 5, 1763. Congratulate you on the strength the Lord gave you last year, and I beseech him to supply the lamp of your days with new oil, during the course of that upon which we are now entering. Above all, may he fill the vessel of your heart with the oil of gladness, and prepare you for all events which time may bring forth. May he enable you to carry the light of his glorious gospel into the hearts of thousands by your writings and sermons, and wisdom and grace into mine by your letters and conversation.

My foul docs not experience a new life in this renovation of the year: O may the Almighty enable me to conclude it in a better spirit than I have begun it! What I want is the li ht and mighty power, of the Spirit of my God. Happy should I be, if, in the midst of all my pressing wants, I had the power and the will constantly to cast my burdens at the seet of the Lord. As to my parish, we are just where we were: we look for our Pentecost, but we do not pray sufficiently to obtain it. We are lest in tolerable quiet by all but the Ser-

geant, who fent a constable to make enquiry concerning the life of his Majesty's subjects, upon information that the cry of murder had been heard in my house on Christmas day. This report originated in the cries of a young woman, who is of our society, and whom satan has bound for some months.

It feems to me, as if that old murderer proposed to ruin the success of my ministry at Madeley, as he did at London, in the French church, my means of Miss A-d. She emaciates her body by fasting, falls into convulsions, sometimes in the church and fometimes in our private affemblies, and is perpetually tempted to fuicide: Her conflictation is confiderably weakened as well as her understanding. What to do in this case, I do not know; for those, who are tempted in this manner, pay as little regard to reason, as the miserable people in Bedlam. Prayer and fasting are our only resources: We propose to represent her case to the Lord on Tuesday next, and on all the following Tuesdays; aid the weakness of our prayers, with all the power of yours. Adieu. That the Lord may strengthen you and yours in body and foul, is the earnest prayer of yours, &cc. I. F.

To Mifs HATTON.

Dear Madam, Madeley, Jan. 28, 1763.

I Share in the joy, which your deliverance from your late trials gives to those who shared in your perplexity. Heaviness may endure for a night but gladness cometh in the morning; and when it comes after a long, uneasy night, it is doubly welcome, and deserves a double tribute of praises. O be not wanting in that sweet duty!—I mean praising, from a sense of the divine goodness, love, and patience towards us. Remember that you are brought from darkness to light, to shew forth the praises

feet are fet at liberty for you to run, with pa tience, the race of prayer and praise, self-denial and obedience, which the Lord hath set before

you.

Would you go on comfortably and steadily for the time to come, beg of the Lord, to give you grace to follow the following advice. 1. Live above earthly and creature comforts. 2 Beware of flatness and lukewarmness: this, if not carried immediately to the Lord, ends often in darkness and deadness .- 3. Value divine comforts above all things, and prize Christ above all comforts, that if they should fail, you may still glory in the God of your falvation. 4. Let that, which torments others, make your happiness-I mean felf denial, and renouncing your own will. 5. Be ready to yield, with joy, to every conviction of the Spirit of God. 6. Be faithful to prefent grace, and aspire after a continual growth. 7. Live the prefent moment to God, and avoid perplexing yourfelf about your past or future experience: by giving up yourfelf to Christ, as you are, and being willing to receive him now, as he is, leaving all the rest to him, you will cut up a thousand temptations I am, &c. by the roots.

To Mifs HATTON.

Dear Madam, Madeley, March 14, 1763. If Am very glad you perfift in taking up your cross, and following the Captain of our salvation. You must expect many a difficulty: some of your greatest trials may come from your dearest friends without, and your nearest part within. I always found it profitable to expect the worst, for a temptation foreseen is half overcome. Let us count the cost daily, and learn to value all outward things as dung and dross, that we may win Christ.

My heart is at prefent full of an advice, which I have just given, with some success, to the Israelites in the wilderness, about this place: Spend, in " feeling after Christ, by the prayer of " fuch faith as you have, whether it be dark or " luminous, the time you have hitherto fpent in desponding thoughts, in perplexing considera-" tions upon the badness, or uncertainty of your " state, and come now to the Lord Jesus with your or present wants, daring to believe that he waits " to be gracious to you." Christ is the way, the high-way to the Father, and an high-way is as free for a fickly beggar as a glorious prince. If it is fuggested, "you are too prefumptuous to in-" trude without ceremony upon Him, that is " glorious in holiness, and fearful in praises;"answer, in looking up to Jesus.

"Be it,—I myself deceive,— Yet I must,—I must believe."

Mr. M—d—'s reply to Mr. Wesley's answer seems to me just in some points, and in others too severe. Mr. Wesley is, perhaps, too tenacious of some expressions, and too prone to credit what he wishes concerning some mistaken witnesses of the state of fathers in Christ. Mr. M—. perhaps, esteems too little the inestimable privilege of being perfected in that love, which casts out fear: But, in general, I conceive, if I do not presume of myself in answering your question, that it would be better for babes, or young men in Christ, to cry for a growth in grace, than to dispute whether fathers in Christ enjoy such or such privileges. I am, with sincerity, &c.

To Mr. SAMUEL HATTON.

Dear Sir, Madeley, April 22, 1763.

I Am glad to find by your welcome letter, that Jefus is still precious to you. O may he be so an hundred fold more both to me and you! May we live only to shew forth his praise, and grow up

into him in all things!

As for me, I have reason to praise God, that he gives me patience to throw in my weak line, till he gives the word and enables me to cast the net on the right side, and enclose a multitude of sinners. The hope of this bears me up above the toils of a night of ignorance, perplexity, and trials of every sort. I find, blessed be God, that all things work together for my good, whether it be success or want of success, joy or grief, sickness or ease, bad or good report: All encourages or humbles me.

With respect to Miss Hattons, I hope they will call no man upon earth master, and that they will steer clear of the rocks of prejudice and bigotry, against which so many professors split daily, even when they think they are at the greatest distance

from them.

I am quite of your opinion about the mischief that some professors (pussed up in their own slessly minds,) do in the Church of Christ under the mask of sanctity; but my Master bids me bear with the tares until the harvest, lest in rooting them up, I should promiseuously pull up the wheat also. As to Mr. Wesley's system of perfection, it tends rather to promote humility than pride, if I may credit his description of it, in the lines following.

"Now let me gain perfection's height, Now let me into nothing fall, Be lefs than nothing in my fight, And feel that Christ is all in adl."

More

More than this I do not defire, and I hope that thort of this, nothing will fatisfy either, my dear friend or me.

With respect to "one Mr. B—n, having been so bold as to affert in your room, that our salvation was conditional," he may be orthodox enough, in my poor judgment, altho' he said so. Indeed the meritorious part of our salvation is unconditional on our side, and if Mr. B—n talks of meritorious conditions, he is a stranger to the gospel: But, that the application of this salvation is conditional, I gather from every doctrinal chapter in the Bible, especially from, Luke xiii. 3. and Mark xvi. 16.

Have you drank in the doctrine of particular redemption, contrary to the thoughts of your esteemed friend, Count Zinzendors? But be that as it will, let us still make the best of our way to the dear Saviour, and drop all our particular opinions in his universal, unbounded love; and whereinsoever any of us is wrong the Lord will reveal it unto us. Pray for my slock; and pray for, Dear Sir, your sincere friend, and affectionate brother in Christ,

J. F.

To the Rev. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Sir, Madeley, July 26, 1763.

I Have for two months waited impatiently for fome news of you, but in vain. Are you alive, paralytic, gouty, flothful, or too bufy to write a line to your friends at Madeley? If you have not leifure to write a line, write a word, I am well, or I am ill: God grant it may be the former!

Every thing is pretty quiet here now. Many of our offences die away; tho' not long ago, I had trials in abundance, but bleffed be the Lord he gave me his peace. It is not, however, with-

out fighting that I keep it. One of my late trials might have had consequences to make me quit Madeley, and, I praise God, I am ready to do it without looking behind me, even this day. The young person, I mentioned as being sorely tempted of the devil, is happily delivered; and we have had the testimonies of Mr. Mould who preached here three weeks ago, and of Mr. R—, who spent four days here, and preached last Sunday. He is an excellent young man, and only wants a little of the Methodist zeal to temper the reserve of Mr. W—.

When will you come to Madeley? What do you do at London? Have you repaired the breach, and healed the plague? May the Lord give you all the wisdom, the patience, the zeal, the gentleness, and the health you stand in need of! Ask them for your poor brother,

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madam, Madeley, Aug. 3, 1763.

Am heartily glad to find by the contents of I your letter, that your heart is more fet upon obtaining the one thing needful, Christ in us, with all his graces, the hope of glory. I beg, in my Master's name, you would cherish the conviction of the need of this prize of your high calling, and purfue it in the new and living way in which the fathers trod, that of the cross, and that of faith. We travel in the first, by continually denying felf, in the defire of the flesh, the defire of the eye, and the pride of life; and we advance in the fecond, by aiming at Christ, claiming Christ, embracing Christ, delighting and rejoicing in Christ received in the heart, thro' the channel of the gospel promises. To be able to go in the way of the cross, and that of faith, you fland in need, Madam, of much recollection, and steady watchfulnels

fulness over the workings of your own heart, and diligent attention to the whispers of divine grace. That the Lord would powerfully enable us to run on with faith and patience, till we inherit the promises, is the prayer of, Madam, your fervant in Christ,

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madam.

Madeley, Aug. 19, 1763.

RS. Hatton gave me this morning your feri-ous letter. You wifely observe therein the continual need professing Christians have to guard against religious chit chat, and conclude by requesting a few lines, when I should have an opportunity of writing; but, as there is nothing in your letter which requires an answer, I was thinking, whether I could answer it without being guilty of religious chit chat; for as there is fuch a thing in fpeaking, no doubt in writing also. I believe I should have facrificed to conscience what the world calls good manners, had I not just after accidentally opened Lopez's Life upon the following paffage, which I shall transcribe, hoping it will be bleffed both to the reader and copier. "He was " as sparing of words in writing, as in speaking. "He never wrote first to any one, nor did he " answer others, but when necessity or charity " obliged him to it; and then so precisely, and " in fo few words, that nothing could be re-"trenched. I have feveral of his letters in my " hands of five or fix lines each. In answer to " those he had received from the Viceroy of " Mexico, he fent him one containing only thefe

"words:—"I will do what you command me."
"And altho' this manner of writing might feem
difrespectful to persons of so high quality, yet
it gave no offence from one, who was so far
from all compliments, and who never spoke

" any thing superfluous."

Now,

Now, Madam, for fear of writing any thing superfluous, I shall conclude by wishing both you and I may follow Lopez, as he followed Christ; and subscribing myself, Madam, the ready servant of you and yours in the gospel,

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

My dear Friend in the Lord, Madeley, ----I Thought last Sunday that you were not far from the kingdom of God: Had your wisdom stooped a little more to the foolighness of the cross, you would have been the little child to whom God reveals what he justly hides from the wife and prudent. I longed to have followed you, and given you no rest till you had drunk the cup of bleffing, which your Lord hath mixed for you with his bitter tears, and most precious blood. And how glad was I to find last night, that you had no aversion to Jesus and his love, nor to the fimple, foolish way of entertaining him in your heart, as you can by mere faith. How often fince has my heart danced for joy, in hope that the time is come, that the Lord will fully open your heart, like that of Lydia, to attend, without cavilling, or objecting, to his still, small voice-" I am " thine, and thou art mine. Fear not, for I " have redeemed thee, thou worm Jacob. I have " graven thy name, (i. e. finner) upon the palms " of my hands. I shall see in thee the travail of " my foul and shall be fatisfied. Let me not " upbraid thee longer for wilful unbelief and " hardness of heart; but believe upon the testi-" mony of my word and fervants, that I am rifen " for thy justification. Say not, I must ascend " into heaven, or descend into the deep-1 must " feel first such a height of joy or depth of sorrow; " no: Believe simply that the word is nigh thee, " in thy mouth and in thy heart, namely the word of faith preached unto thee. I am the Lamb of God; I have carried away thy fins, and I "do not condemn thee, tho' thou condemnest " thyfelf. I am he, that, for mine own fake, blotteth out thy fins as a cloud, and thy ini-" quities as a thick cloud: Because I will have " mercy, on whom I will have mercy, namely on him, who will be faved in my way, by that faith which stumbles the Jew, and is foolifbness to the Greek, but which will prove to thee both the wisdom and power of God. " Fear not, then, O thou of little faith; where-" fore shouldest thou doubt any longer? Do I " despise the day of small things? Do I break " the bruifed reed, or quench the smoking flax? " Am not I the good Shepherd, who carrieth the lambs in his bosom? Does a mother forsake "her fucking child, because it is weak, fickly, un-" able to walk, or even to fland? Yea, though a " mother should so forfake her child, yet will I never leave thee nor forfake thee. Only lean on "thy Beloved, and I will bring thee up out of the wilderness. Abandon thyself wholly to my " care, and I, the Keeper of Ifrael, will care " for thee; and thy bufiness shall be henceforth to repose on my bosom, and wash thee in my " bleeding heart; and my bufinefs shall be to " carry thee fafe thro'. or above all thy enemics. Only remember thy business is to believe and " love: And trust me for a faithful discharge of " mine—to fave thee with a high hand."

Thus, my friend, will your dear Saviour speak to your heart, if you do not drown his voice by the objections of your false wisdom. O down with it; it is the fruit of the tree of death. Away to the tree of life; take freely, eat and live. I know you are willing thro' grace; and Christ, who hath made you willing, is ten thousand times more willing than you: How, then, can he cast

you out? What hinders but that you should, as a spiritual Rebekah, say, " Now and ever, I will have that man?" You go upon a fure bortom, you need not fear being flighted; for in the letter he hath wrote you from heaven, to invite you to the marriage, he fays, " I have betrothed thee to me with everlasting," yea with bleeding kindnefs. Indeed, indeed he sends me to you, to affure you he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; and were you the fifter of Magdalen in outward wickedness, he fends you word, that you may kifs his feet, and rejoice that much is forgiven you, even tho' you should not have one tear to wash them with-his blood, his precious blood hath washed his feet, and does wash your heart, and will wash it white as snow. O let it be your business to consider it with a believing thought: That is the way to apply it to your heart.

I would have called on you this morning, had not my intended journey prevented it: Till I have an opportunity of calling, I beg, as upon my knees, you would make use of the following directions, which I think as truly applicable to

your state, as they are truly evangelical.

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1. It is better perishing, for believing wrong, than for not believing at all: Venture then, with Esther, "If I perish, I perish." I had rather perish in trying to touch the sceptre of grace, than in indole thy waiting till the King touches me with it.

2. Christ often reveals himself "as a babe, a feeble infant, 'crying for milk in a manger." Do not you despise him in his lowest, weakest state: Do not say to your Saviour, I will not receive thee, unless thou appear in a blaze of glorious light. Reject not the little leaven; and if your grain of faith is small as mustard seed, be the more careful not to throw it away as dirt. The Holy Ghost says, "The light of the just shines Vol. IX.

more and more to the perfect day;" and how feeble is the first light of the early morning, how undiscernible from darkness!

3. Sin gives you your first title to the Friend of sinners, and a simple naked faith the second. Do not then, puzzle yourself about contrition, faithfulness, love, joy, power over sin, and a thousand such things, which the white devil will persuade you, you must bring to Christ. He will receive you gladly with the greatest mountain of sin; and the smallest grain of faith, at Christ's feet, will remove that mountain.

4. At the peril of your foul, defire a' present neither peace nor joy, nor puzzle yourself even about love. Only defire, that that blessed Man may be your Bridegroom, and that you may firmly believe that he is so, because he hath given you his sless and blood upon the cross; and keep

believing this, and trusting in him.

5. You have nothing to do with fin and felf, altho' they will have much to do with you. Your business is with fesus, with his free, unmerited

love, with his glorious promises, &c. &c.

6. Strongly expect no good from your own heart: expect nothing but unbelief, hardness, unfaithfulness, and backsliding; and when you find them there, be not shaken nor discomposed; rather rejoice that you are to live, by faith, on the faithful heart of Christ, and cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

7. When you are dull and heavy, as you will often be, remember to live on Christ, and claim him the more by naked faith. I have not time to say more, but Jesus, whom you hold by the hem of his promise, will teach you all the day long. Look unto him, and be saved; and remember he forgives seventy times seven in one day. May his dawning love attend you till it is noon day

in your foul; and pray for him, who earnestly prays for you, I mean for your unworthy fervant, I. F.

To Mrs. GLYNNE.

Dear Madam, Madeley, Sept. 2, 1763.

Thank you for your kind remembrance, and good wishes that I might eat the everlasting bread of our Father's house, expressed by a present of the most incorruptible bread our earth affords. I should be glad to take the opportunity of Mr. Wesley's stay at Salop, to thank you in person, and eat with you the bread—the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, handed out by him; but I am obliged to set out to day for Lady Huntingdon's college, and shall not, I fear, be in Shropshire, when Mr. Wesley comes.

If the Father of lights hath drawn your foul in any warmer defires after the glorious sense of his love, and enabled you to sit down and count the cost, and give up fully, whatever may have a tendency to keep you out of the delightful enjoyment of the pearl of great price, I shall rejoice greatly; for it is my hearty desire, that all my Christian friends, and I, might grow up daily towards the measure of the full stature of Christ.

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I return you my most affectionate thanks, Madam, for your book, and for the franks you added to it. May you use all the promises of the gospel as franks from Jesus, to send momentary petitions to heaven, and may an unwearied faith be the diligent messenger!

What proved a disappointment to you, was none to me, having been forced, by many such disappointments, to look for comfort in nothing but these comprehensive words—"Thy will be done!" A few more trials will convince you, experimentally, of the heavenly balm they contain, to sweeten the pains and heal the wounds, that crosses

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and afflictions may cause. We often improvemore, by one hour's resignation, than by a month's reading; and when we can exercise neither gifts nor graces, one of the last is always excepted—

Patience; which is then worth all the rest. O let us make the best of our day, Madam:—a day of grace—a gospel day—a day of health—a precarious day of life! Let us believe, hope, love, obey, repent, spend and be spent for him, who hath loved us unto death.

Mr. M. faid your portmanteau would go today; but whether it goes or stays, let neither wind nor tide keep us back from Jesus Christ. That his love may fill our hearts, is the repeated wish of, dear Madam, your unworthy friend and servant in Christ,

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

Madeley, Sept. 9, 1763.

My dear Sir,

I See that we ought to learn continually to cast our burdens on the Lord, who alone can bear them without satigue and pain. If M— returns, the Lord may correct his errors, and give him so to insist on the fruits of saith, as to prevent antinomianism. I believe him sincere; and though obstinate and suspicious, I am persuaded he has a true desire, to know the will and live the life of God. I reply in the same words you quoted to me in one of your letters, "Do not be afraid of

You ask me a very singular question with respect to women; I shall, however, answer it with
a smile, as I suppose you asked it. You might
have remarked that for some days before I set off
for Madeley, I considered matrimony with a different eye to what I had done: And the person,

a wreck, for Jesus is in the ship." After the most violent storm, the Lord will, perhaps, all at

Who then presented herself to my imagination was Miss Bosanquet. Her image pursued me for some hours the last day, and that so warmly, that I should, perhaps, have lost my peace, if a suspicion of the truth of Juvenal's proverb, Veniunt a dote fagittæ, had not made me blush, sight, and sly to Jesus, who delivered me, at the same moment, from her image, and the idea of marriage. Since that time, I have been more than ever on my guard against admitting the idea of matrimony, sometimes by the consideration of the love of Jesus, which ought to be my whole felicity, and at others, by the following reslections.

It is true the scripture says, that a good wife is a gift of the Lord; and it is also true, that there may be one in a thousand; but who would put in a lottery where are 999 blanks to one prize; and suppose I could discover this Phoenix, this woman of a thousand, what should I gain by it? A distressing refusal. How could she chuse such a man as me? If, notwithstanding all my self love, I am compelled cordially to despise myself, could I be so wanting in generosity, as to expect another to do that for me, which I cannot do for myself—to engage to love, to esteem, and honour me?

I will throw on my paper some reflections, which the last paragraph of your letter gave rise to, and I beg you will weigh them with me, in the balances of the sanctuary.

Reasons for, and against Matrimony.

- 1. A tender friendship is, 1. Death will shortly end after the love of Christ. the greatest felicity of life; and a happy marriage is nothing but fuch a friendship between two persons of different fexes.
- 2. A wife might deliver 2. Marriage brings after me from the difficulties of house-keeping, &c.
- 3. Some objections and 3. If matrimony is not fcandals may be avoided by marriage.
- 4. A pious and zealous 4. wife might be as ufeful as myself; nay, she might be much more fo among my female parishioners, who greatly want an inspectres.

- all particular friendships. The happier the state of marriage, the more afflicting is widow-hood: Besides, we may try a friend and reject him after trial; but we can't know a wife, till it is too late to part with her.
- it an hundred cares and expences; children, & family, &c.
- happy, it is the most fertile fource of fcandals.
 - I have 1000 to 1 to fear that a wife instead of being a help, may be indolent, and confequently useless; or humourfome, haughty, capricious, and confequently a heavy curfe.

Farewell. Yours.

J. F.

To Mr. VAUGHAN.

Dear Sir,

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A S you defire me to tell you fimply what I think of the state of your foul, as described in your letter; I will do it as the Lord shall enable me.

I praise him that he has begun a good work in you, which, I make no doubt, he will finish, if you do not counteract the operations of his grace. Your having sometimes free access to the throne of grace, but soon falling back into deadness and darkness, is the common experience of many who walk sincerely, tho' slowly, towards Sion. It ar gues, on one side, the drawings of faith; and, on the other, the power of unbelief. I would compare such souls to the child of the Patriarch, who came to the birth, nay, saw the light of this world, and yet returned again into his mother's womb, until, after a greater struggle, he broke thro' all that was in his way, and left the place where he had been so long in prison.

If you fall short, yet be not cast down; on the contrary, rejoice that God has begun, and will sinish his work in you; and strive more earnestly to enter in at the strait gate. Watch more unto prayer, and pray for that faith, which enables the believer now to lay hold on eternal life. Remember, however, that your prayers will not avail much, unless you deny yourself, and take up every cross, which the Lord suffers men, devils, or your own heart to lay upon you. In the name of Jesus, and in the power of his might, break thro' all; and you will find daily more and more, that Jesus is the light of the world, and that he, who follows him, shall not wilk in darkness. The peace of Jesus be with you. Farewell.

Yours, &c.

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madeley, March 5, 1761.

YOU feem, Madam, not to have a clear idea of the happings of it of the happiness of the love of Jesus, or, at least, of your privilege of loving-him again. Your dulness in private prayer arises from the want of familiar friendship with Jesus. To obviate it, go to your closet, as if you were going to meet the dearest friend you ever had: cast yourfelf immediately at his feet, bemoan your coldness before him, extol his love to you, and let your heart break with a defire to love him, till it actually melts with his love. Be you, if not the importunate widow, at least the importunate virgin, and get your Lord to avenge you of your adversary-I mean your cold heart.

You ask me some directions to get a mortified

spirit: In order to get it, get Recollection.

RECOLLECTION is a dwelling within ourselves; a being abstracted from the creature, and turned

towards God.

RECOLLECTION is both outward and inward. OUTWARD recollection confifts in filence from all idle and superfluous words; and in folitude, or a wife difentanglement from the world, keeping to our own business, observing and following the order of God for ourselves, and shutting the ear against all curious and unprofitable matters. In-WARD recollection confifts in shutting the door of the fenses, in a deep attention to the presence of God, and in a continual care of entertaining holy thoughts, for fear of spiritual idleness.

Thro' the power of the Spirit, let this recollection be steady even in the midst of hurrying business; let it be calm and peaceable; and let it be lasting. "Watch and pray lest you enter into

temptation."

To maintain this recollection, beware of engaging too deeply, and beyond what is necessary, in outward things: Beware of suffering your affections to be entangled by worldly defire, your imagination to amuse itself with unprofitable objects, and indulging yourfelf in the commission of

what are called small faults.

For want of continuing in a recollected frame all the day, our times of prayer are frequently dry and useless, imagination prevails, and the heart wanders: Whereas we pass easily from recollection to delightful prayer. Without the Spirit, there can be no useful self denial, nor can we know ourselves; but where it dwells, it makes the soul all eye, all ear; traces and discovers fin, repels its first assaults, or crushes it in its earliest risings.

In recollection, let your mind act according to the drawings of grace, and it will probably lead you either, to contemplate Jesus as crucified, and interceding for you, &c; or to watch your fenfes and suppress your passions, to keep before God in respectful silence of heart, and to watch and follow the motions of grace, and feed on the

promises.

But take care here, to be more taken up with the thoughts of God than of yourfelf; and confider how hardly recollection is fometimes obtained, and how eafily it is loft. Use no forced labour to raise a particular frame; nor tire, fret, and grow impatient, if you have no comfort; but meekly acquiesce and confess yourself unworthy of it; lie prostrate in humble submission before God, and patiently wait for the smiles of Jesus.

May the following MOTIVES stir you up to the pursuit of recollection .- 1. We must for sake all, and die to all, first by recollection. 2. Without it God's voice cannot be heard in the foul. 3. It is the altar on which we must offer up our Isaacs. 4. It is instrumentally a ladder (if I may be allowed

lowed the expression) to descend into God. 5. By it the soul gets to its centre, out of which it cannot rest. 6. Man's soul is the temple of God—recollection the holy of holies. 7. As the wicked by recollection sind hell in their hearts, so faithful souls find heaven. 8. Without recollection all means of grace are useless, or make but a light and

transitory impression.

If we would be recollected, we must expect to fuffer. Sometimes, God does not speak immediately to the heart; we must then continue to listen with a more humble silence. Sometimes, assaults of the heart, or of the temper may sollow, together with weariness and a desire to turn the mind to something else: Here we must be patient—By patience unwearied we inherit the promises.

Dissipated souls are severely punished. If any man abide not in Christ, he is cast out as a branch—cast out of the light of God's countenance into the drudgery of the senses. He dries up, and a barrenness follows in the use of the means. The world and satan gather and use him for their service. He is cast into the sire of the passions, of guilt, of temptation, and, perhaps, of hell.

As diffipation always meets its punishment, so recollection never fails of its reward. After patient waiting, comes communion with God, and the sweet sense of his peace and love. Recollection is a castle, an inviolable fortress against the world and the devit: It renders all times and places alike, and is the habitation where Christ and his Bride dwell.

I give you these hints, not to set Christ aside, but that you may, according to the light and power given to you, take these stones and place them upon the chief corner stone, and cement them with the blood of Jesus, until the super-structure,

Aructure, in some measure, answers to the excellence of the foundation. I beg an interest in your prayers for myself, and those committed to my charge; and am, with sincerity, Madam; your fervant for Christ's sake,

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madeley, Sept. 3, 1764. Madam, I Think the state your soul is in is not uncom-mon. The only advice, I can at present give you, is not to look to felf, except it be to believe it away. Be generously determined not to live easy, without the thought of Jesus on your mind, and his love, or at least endeavours after it, in your Then get that love, or the increase of it, by obstinately believing the love of Christ to you, till you are ashamed into some return of it. A paffage I have found much relief from, when my foul hath been in the flate you describe, is, "Likewife reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto fin, but alive unto God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 11. This reckoning by faith, I find, is not reckoning without one's hoft; but Christ is always ready to fet his hand to the bill which faith draws.

With respect to the hindrances your worldly business lays in the way of your soul, I would have you persuaded, that they are by no means insurmountable. The following means, in due subordination to faith in Jesus, may, by the blessing of God, be of service to you.

to business, to put on the whole armour of God, by

close meditation and earnest prayer.

2. Consider the temptation that most easily befets you, whether it be hurry, or vanity, or lightness, or want of recollection to do what you do as
unto God. Ponder the consequences of those sins,

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fee your weakness to resist them, and get at any rate a more sceling sense of your helplessness: when you have it, you will naturally watch unto prayer, and look to Christ for strength from moment to moment.

3. When your mind hath been drawn aside, do not fret, or let yourself go down the stream of nature, as if it was in vain to attempt to swim against it; but confess your fault, and calmly refume your former endeavour, but with more hu-

mility and watchfulness.

4. Steal from business now and then, tho' for two or three minutes only, and in the corner where you can be least observed, pour out your soul in confession, or a short ejaculation at the feet of Jesus, for power to watch, and to believe that he can keep you watching. May you feelingly believe, that he hath bought the power for you, and then of a truth, you will find it done to you according to your faith.

As to your Correspondent's letter, I approve its contents, but would have no one depend on my judgment, especially on the points it treats of; as I have been thought, sometimes, to consider them, with a mind prepossessed in their behalf. This I know, that all cannot, ought not to receive some of the sayings that letter contains; and yet happier far, in my opinion, are those that can and do receive them. Let every one follow grace and Providence, and we shall be guided aright.

I am, &c. J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madam, Madeley, Dec. 1764.

I Am fensible how much I want advice in a thoufand particulars, and how incapable I am safely to direct any one; I shall, nevertheless, venture to throw upon this sheet the following observations,

tions, as they came to my mind on the reading

your letter.

You cannot expect on the gospel plan, to attain to such a carriage as will please all you converse with. The Son of God, the original of all human persection, was blamed, sometimes for his silence, and sometimes for his speaking, &c.; and shall the handmaid be above her Master?

There is no fin in wearing such things as you have by you, if they are not out of character; I mean if they are necessary for your station, and

characterise your rank.

There is no fin in allowing yourfelf a little more latitude of speech, provided you listen to Christ, by inward attention to his teaching, and the end of what you fay may be to introduce what is useful and edifying; for God judgeth of words according to the intention of the speaker. I may fpeak idly even in the pulpit; and I may fpeak to edification in the market, if what I fay, is either necessary, or proper to introduce, or drive the nail of a profitable truth. Some parables of our Lord would have been deemed idle talk, had it not been for the end he purfued, and, upon the whole, accomplished by them. No particular rule can be given here; a thousand circumstances of perfons, tempers, places, times, states, &c. will necessarily vary a christian's plan.

There is no fin in looking cheerful. No, it is our duty to be cheerful—Rejoice evermore; and if it is our duty always to be filled with joy, it is our duty to appear what we are in reality I hope, however your friends know how to distinguish between

cheerfulness and levity.

If you want to recommend religion to those you converse with, and, in many instances, to pluck up offence by the root, let our heart lie where Mary's body did. Keep close to Jesus, be attentive

with humble love, and fuch love will teach you, without any rule, as by the instinct of your new

nature, " to become all things to all men."

You ask what the apostle meant by that expression: It is certain he did not mean to overset his own precept, "Be not conformed to the world." I apprehend, that in every case, wherein we might promote the spiritual or temporal good of any one, by doing or suffering things of an indifferent nature, or even painful and disagreeable to us, we ought to be ready to become all things to all; provided the good we propose is superior to the inconveniencies to which we submit. Here also we stand im need of humble love, and meek wisdom, that we may so weigh circumstances, as to form a right judgment in all things.

I am glad the Lord strips you: I wish felf may never clothe you again. Beware of stiff singularity in things barely indifferent: It is felf in disguise; and it is so much the more dangerous, as it comes recommended by a serious, self denying, religious

appearance.

I hope the short-comings of some about you, will not prevent your eying the prize of a glorious conformity to our blessed Head. It is to be seared, that not a few of those, who talk of having attained it, have mistaken the way: They are still something, and I apprehend an important step towards that conformity, is to become nothing; or rather, with St. Paul, to become in our own eyes the chief of sinners, and the least of saints.

Mr. Harris feems to me one among ten thoufand; he has left a particular blessing behind him in this place.—The God of peace give us the blessings that the Messenger and the Mediator of the New Covenant brought with him, at this time, into the world: May we so receive him, that, by a blessed exchange, as he was clad with our

flesh

flesh, so we may put him on, and be covered with his righteousness and filled with his Spirit! Salute the Church in your house. From your servant in the gospel, J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madeley, Jan. 31, 1765. Madam, VOU strive, pray, resist, but are little the better;" yet pray, strive, and refist on. It is good to be tried, and to get a bleffing in the very fire: We shall then know how to value it properly. But let me be free with you, Madam; do you pray, refift, and strive against wanderings with any steadiness, and do you do it in cheerful hope to overcome through the blood of the Lamb? When you have been unhinged from Christ, in mind or heart, do you with stronger indignation against wanderings, a calmer expectation of the affistance of the Spirit, and a deeper agony of faith, feek to be avenged of your Adversary? Do you imitate the importunate widow? If this be the case, you will not complain long; for whatfoever we thus ask in the name of Christ, we shall surely receive: And should the Lord, for reasons best known to himself, try your faith and hope; yet that longer trial will be found to praife and honour, in the end. Only faint not; and when you find yourfelf inclined to do fo, in all haste fly to the cordial of the promises, and determine to take nothing elfe, till your heart is revived and made strong again.

The same power of God, thro' praying saith, is necessary to keep you from reasoning unprositably. Whenever this arises to any height, there is one thing wanting, a steadily exerted will, never thus to reason. We cannot be so easily betrayed, or slide away into this snare of the devil so easily, as into the other. I apprehend that whosever

abides fleadily purposed not to reason, shall not do it. The Will starts aside first, the resolution of course solloweth, and the Tempter easily takes their place. Get willing, truly willing under the cross, and keep there, to keep your will in con-

tinual subjection to the Will of God.

Last Sunday I preached two sermons upon Heb. xi. and 1. I see so much in that saith of the apostle, that I can hardly pray for any thing besides "that evidence of things not seen, that substance of things hoped for." To how many mistakes, and satal errors have we opened the door by varying from the apostle, and pretending to be wifer than the Holy Ghost! The Lord fills you and yours with that saith!

Farewell.

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madam, Madeley, June 2, 1765.

Thank you for the letter of your correspondent. What he says about luminous joy, may fometimes be the case in some of God's dear children; but I apprehend, that God's design in withholding from them those gracious influences, which work upon and melt the sensitive, affectionate part in the soul, is to put us more upon using the nobler powers, the understanding and the will. These are always more in the reach of a child of God, while the other greatly depend upon the texture of the animal frame; and if they are not stirred in a natural way, the Spirit of God can alone, without our concurrence in general, excite them. Do you believe, love, take up your cross, and run after Jesus.

You must let friends and foes talk about your dress, while you mind only Jesus, his word, and your own conscience. You talk of hearing me foon.—I date never invite any one to hear me, though I am glad to see my friends: But now I

ran invite you with pleasure to come and hear a preacher, who, under God, will make you amends for the trouble of a journey to Madeley. His name is M.—; he may possibly stay a Sunday or two more with me; but Jesus has promised to be always with his poor followers: To his merciful hands I commend both you and your unworthy friend,

J. F.

To Mifs HATTON.

Madeley, Aug. 8, 1765.

R. MATHER and I have confidered your objections to our little confession of faith; be

pleased to take the following short answers.

I. We do not forget, that God works all good in all men: This is clearly implied in our first article; but we do not believe, that his working is generally irresistible, or that it superfedes our being workers together with him.

II. Can any one work out his falvation, by a faith productive of fanctification, and yet neglect

good works? Impossible!

III. Obdurate finners, if their day of grace is not over, have always power to believe fome legal truths at least, and to renounce fome abominations in consequence of that belief: If they resist the Spirit here, what wonder that he does not proceed any farther! Convictions of sin, as well as of righteousness, are not always so strong as to carry all before them. As the dew falls more frequently on the earth than hard showers, so more gentle, less observable, and more gradual droppings of grace descend upon earthly hearts, more frequently than driving storms of sear, or strong transports of love: Their effects may be as gracious, tho' less forcible, and God hath all the glory of the one, as well as of the other.

IV. " Can convinced finners under the found of the gospel believe with the heart, &c.?" Thro' the power of God, always more or less present, they can believe with the heart those truths, which are " fuited to their wants, and properly propofed to them." If they cannot, why does God call up n them to believe, and fend them word, they shall be damned if they do not? As to your query. " Does not God formetimes delay to confer the power to believe, for a trial of the grace of Conviction?" We answer, that we see no such thing. in the New Testament, and that the affertion feems to be a piece of human wisdom. Why were not the convictions of the harlot, of the 3000, the 5000, the jailer and others, tried by a refusal of the gift of faith? If, therefore, perfons truly convinced of fin, do not believe to the comfort of their fouls, we apprehend the reason to be, their being kept in the dark as to the gospel way of falvation, their confounding faith and its fruits, their difregarding the one talent, and de-Spifing the little leaven, and the faith which is small as a grain of mustard seed: In short, their rejecting an inward Christ, because he does not make his appearance, at first, as a mighty, glorious conqueror, but as a weak, naked, crying babe, who wants both milk and fwaddling clothes for his present sustenance.

"tempt." Here, we apprehend, you grant us what we contend for; it being abfurd to make any attempt towards what is totally impossible. If fuch people ought to attempt to believe now, and not to doubt of the Lord's concurrence with their attempt, it follows that either you press them not to doubt of a lie, or that the Lord now helps

them

them to believe, if they will accept his help in

the manner and way it is offered.

We cannot conceive what ingredient more you would require to make faith, than on the one fide, the promise of God and the gracious help of his Spirit, and on the other, genuine conviction and an humble attempt to cast ourselves on the fidelity,

mercy, and power of the Lord.

Indeed you infinuate, that God's concurrence may not be granted now .- " Perhaps, not now," are your words; but not those of Ananias, who faid to convinced Saul, "Arife, why tarrieft thou? wash away thy fins, calling," or believing, " on the name of the Lord" If God does not concur now to help convinced finners to believe, we still affirm that they cannot, without great cruelty, be called upon now to attempt an utter impossibility, or, if we may use your expression, " to touch heaven with their hands." This proviso of yours, this "perhaps, not now," feems the common way of clogging and mangling the gospel. We see nothing of it in holy Writ; there we read, "believe, and thou shalt be favedfear not, only believe," &c. We never read, believe, -but perhaps not now .- Only believe, -but first wait God's time, he does not, perhaps, chuse thou shouldest believe now. There is the quinteffence of the poison of the old Serpent, in the supposition that God commands now, but is not, perhaps, willing that we should obey him now. Believe, -perhaps, not now: Repent, be chaste, be honest be sober, be charitable—perhaps, not now. Good God! What room will this not now—leave for present infidelity, uncleanness, drunkenness, injustice, &c. and every imaginable abomination!

Upon second thoughts, we would hope, that your perhaps, not now, does not regard our believing, but God's bringing forth the top-stone, while we shout Grace unto it: And in this sense, we find

faith and hope are often tried, yea to the uttermost. Isaac was not born immediately on God's making the promise, or Abraham's believing it. A joy unspeakable and full of glory does not always, immediately accompany the belief of the promife of forgiveness of fin, and of deliverance from its dominion: -- "Have ye received the Holy Ghost fince ye believed?—After that ye believed, ye were fealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.-Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing," &c. This was the language of St. Paul, and we dare not confound what he distinguishes, namely, " believing and tasting all the rich fruits of faith." Concerning fome of these, which faith does not, in general immediately produce, we allow you to fay, perhaps, not now; but tho' they tarry, yet wait for them, " for they will furely come."

"Restless, resign'd, for these I wait, For these my vehement soul stand still."

But observe, r. That this earnest, patient waiting, is one of the bleffed fruits of faith, and not fomething previous to it, as you feem to imagine. 2. That we do not suppose it necessary for those, who are truly convinced of fin, and defire to be justified freely by the grace of God, thro' the redemption that is in Christ, to wait at all before they believe, that " he is made unto them of God righteoufness," for the present pardon of their sin: Nor for these, who are truly weary of their earnal mind, to wait before they believe, that "he is made unto them of God fanctification," for the present destruction of it: For the promise is even now to us, and to our children, (those that are afar off not excepted) if they lay hold of it by faith. But greater discoveries, riper fruits, richer tastes, fuller enjoyments of these blessings, together with a being more strengthened, established, and

and settled in them, is what we esteem our privilege to expect, and wait for, in the manner your describe.

(V) You feem to suspect that this faith, on the one hand, leads to Antinomianism, and on the other, takes from God the glory of our salvation.

As to the first suspicion, we hope it is obviated in our second and fourth answers, it being impossible, that a faith, consequent upon real conviction and weariness of sin, and begotten by the pure gospel word, thro' the Spirit,—a faith, which leads to fanctification and the destruction of the carnal mind,—a faith, which is productive of all the ripest fruits of the Spirit, can be merely notional, or have the least tendency to Antinomianism.

And as to the second, we detest the thought of having the least share in the glory of Christ, as our only Redeemer, and of the Spirit, as our only Sanctifier. We abhor it as much as the proud and mad conceit of sharing with God the glory of our Creator and Preserver. We constantly ascribe to free grace all the honour of man's falvation, and are persuaded, that from the first half-formed defire raised in the heart, and the least degree of power given for the improvement of it, to the final victory over our last enemy, all is of grace, -of mere grace. But as we may give God all the glory of our creation and prefervation, without supposing that he must breathe, eat, drink, rest, dress, plough, and reap for us; fo we apprehend that we may give Christ all the glory of our redemption and falvation, without excusing ourselves from the performance of what he enjoins, and of his own free, undeferved grace, gives us both will and power to do.

I rejoice that your foul prospers: you need not look back any more. When you are tempted to hurry and inward impatience, remember you are not obliged to give way to it. Take up these little crosses

crosses patiently, by believing, looking inward, and finding Jesus in the midst of business. "He is here, he is here, as my all," will break many, yea ten thousand snares. May the peace of God be with you and your's! Farewell, J. F.

To Mr. ALEXANDER MATHER.

My dear Brother,

Thank you for your last favour. If I ans-Wered not your former letter, it was because I was in expectation of feeing you, and not from the least difregard. I am glad you enjoy peace at Wellington, and I hope you will-do so at the Trench when you go there. My reasons for stepping there myself were not to seize upon the spot first, (as the Accuser of the brethren may have infinuated) but to fulfil a promise I made to the people of vifiting them, if they would not countenance a lying wretch who went to them from the Bank: all this was previous to my knowledge of the invitation they gave you. I defire you will call there as often as you have opportunity. occasional exhortation from you or your companion at the rank, Dale, &c. will be esteemed a favour, and I hope that my stepping, as Providence directs, to any of your places, (leaving to you the management of the focieties) will be deemed no encroachment. In short, we need not make two parties: I know but one heaven below, and that is Jefus's love; let us both go and abide in it, and when we have gathered as many as we can to go with us, too many will still stay behind.

I find there are in the ministry as in the common experience of Christians, times which may be compared to Winter: no great stir is made in the world of grace, beside that of storms and offences, and the growth of the trees of the Lord is not showy; but when the tender buds of brotherly and redeeming love begin to fill, Spring is at hand. The Lord give us harvest after seed time. Let us wait for fruit as the husbandman, and remember, that he who believes does not make haste. The love of Christ be with us all. Pray for J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

Madam, Madeley, Jan. 13, 1766.

Am almost ashamed of answering your letters after my long delays, but better late than never; as I hope your indulgence will put the best confir ction on what time does not allow me to make

an apology for.

I do not wonder if********************************
been a fnare to entangle your thoughts, but it is now over; and what is that to thee? follow thou Christ. You may, however, learn this lesson, that the minding Christ and our own souls, with Mary, while we leave the world to Martha, is no easy thing in a day of temptation; and that no one knows what he is, till he is tried, and tried in the tenderest points—love, liberty, esteem, and sharp bodily pain. Lord prepare us for such trials, and may we encounter them, in the whole armour of God.

This evening I have buried one of the warmest opposers of my ministry, a stout, strong young man, aged twenty four years. About three months ago, he came to the church yard with a corpse, but refused to come into the church. When the burial was over, I went to him, and mildly expossuated with him. His constant answer was, that he had bound himself never to come to church, while I was there; adding, that he would take the consequences, &c. Seeing I got nothing, I left him, saying with uncommon warmth, (tho' as far as I can remember, without the least touch of resentment,) "I am clear of

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your blood; henceforth it is upon your own head; you will not come to church upon your legs, prepare to come upon your neighbours shoulders." He wasted from that time; and to my great surprize, hath been buried on the spot where we were, when the conversation passed between us. When I visited him in his sickness, he seemed tame as a wolf in a trap. O may God have turned him into a sheep in his last hours!

This last year is the worst I have had here,—barren in convictions, fruitful in backslidings. May this prove for us, and for you, the acceptable year of the Lord. I beg your prayers on this

behalf.

I have filled my page, but not with Jesus's name: let your heart contain what my letter wants—Jesus and his precious blood—Jesus, and his free, glorious salvation: Live to him, breathe for him; buy, sell, eat, drink, read, write for him. Receive him as yours altogether, and give him your whole self, with all that is around you. Take us all, Lord, into thy gracious favour, stamp us with thy glorious image, and conduct us to thy eternal kingdom!

Present my Christian respects to Mrs. Hatton, your sister, and all your friends, and accept the

fame from your unworthy brother,

J. F.

To Mifs Hatton.

My dear Friend, Madeley, May, 1766.

I Am forry, after the manner of men, that you are ill, but glad in the spirit, that the will of Ged takes place in you, and that he purges you, that you may bring forth more fruit. Now-is the time for you to begin to be a Christian in good earnest—I mean, "to follow the Man of forrows;" and to do it as a lamb, who goes to the slaughter, and opens not his mouth by way of complaint; though

though as a Christian, I apprehend you may and

ought to open it by way of praise.

One advice I will venture to give you, or rather to transcribe for you out of Isaiah,—"The believer does not make haste," to doubt, to hurry, to forecast, and to reason after the manner of men;—"If I am a child of God, why am not I thus and thus?" Let Christ, either suffering for you, or ordering your sufferings, be so eyed, that you may in a manner forget and lose yourself in him; or if a weak and pained body makes you think of wretched self, let it be to lay it down with composure at Jesus's feet, or to take up the burden of the cross with cheerful resignation. I hope to hear soon of your being recovered in body, and strengthened in soul by this affliction.

"Is any prayer acceptable to God, which is not the dictates of his own Spirit?" If you mean by the dictates of the Spirit, his influence on the mind to shew us our wants, and upon the heart to make us desire a supply of them: I answer, no; for a prayer, which hath not, at least, the above mentioned qua-

lities, is only a vain babbling.

"Does a believer always pray with the Spirit's assistance?" Yes, when he prays as a believer, and not as a parrot: for at his lowest times, he has, more or less, a sight of his wants, and a desire to have them supplied; and this he could not have, did not the Spirit work upon his mind and heart.

I hope you fink inwardly into nothing, and thro' nothing into the immensity of God. I see a little, thro' mercy, into the beauty of humiliation; I find the ministry of condemnation glorious; and I love to take, every moment, the curse out of Moses's hand, as well as the blessing out of Christ's. The Lord grant that you and I, and all our friends, may do it more feelingly and constantly ever hour!

May the Physician of soul and body refresh, strengthen, establish, and thoroughly heal you, by Vol. IX.

the virtue of his blood, and the word of his power! Bear well, and farewell. Your unworthy fervant,

J. F.

To Miss HATTON.

My dear Friend, Madeley, May 27, 1766.

Am glad to hear that the God of all mercy and grace has raised you from the bed of sicknefs, where his love had confined you. It is good to fee his works in the deep, and then to come and fing his praises in the land of the living. A touch of pain or fickness I find always profitable to me, as it rivets on my foul the thoughts of my nothingnefs, helpleffnefs, and mortality; and shews me in a clearer light, the vanity of all the transitory scenes of life. May your afflictions have the same effect upon you, as long as you live. May you be more stedfast than I am, to retain the deep impressions, which God's gracious rod may have left upon your foul: and may you learn to lay yourfelf out more for the Lord, and to do whatfeever your hand findeth to do, with all your might; knowing, that there is no wisdom, nor device in the grave, whither we are going.

If a sparrow salleth not to the ground, nor a hair from our head, without our heavenly Father's leave, it is certain, that the higher circumstances of our life are planned by the wise and gracious, Governor of all things. This kind of faith in Providence, I find of indispensable necessity, to go calmly thro' life, and, I think too, thro' death also.

The coming of Mr. Wesley's preachers into my parish, gives me no uneasiness: As I am sensible that every body does better, and, of course, is more acceptable than myself, I should be forry to deprive any one of a blessing; and I rejoice that the work of God goes on, by any instrument, or in any place.

place. How far it might have been expedient, to have postponed preaching regularly in my part, till the Minister of —— had been reconciled to the invasion of his; and how far this might have made my way *smoother*, I do not pretend to determine: Time will show it, and, in the mean while, I

find it good to have faith in Providence.

I fear I have left as great a stink at Bath, as Mr. Brown has a sweet savour here. Every thing is good to me that shews me my unprofitableness more and more; but I desire to grieve, that the good of my private humiliation is so much overbalanced by the loss of many about me.—The Lord fill you with all peace and joy in your soul, and with all stringth and health in your body. My respects wait upon your mother and sister, and all friends. Farewell.

J. F.

To Mifs HATTON.

My dear Friend, Madeley, June 21, 1766.

Am much concerned to hear, by Mrs. Power, that you are fo weak; but my concern has greatly increased, since I was told, that the foundation of your illness was laid at Madeley, and I am afraid by my imprudence, in taking you to the woman, with whom we received the sacrament. I ask God's pardon and yours for it, and I hope it will be a means of humbling me, and making me more tender of my friends.

The advice you give me about my health is feafonable: I hope to follow it; nor am I conscious that I have neglected it at all; however, I will endeavour, that there be not so much as the shadow

of a call for repeating it.

If the air at Wem does not agree with you, could you not come fo far as Madeley? The remedy is often most successfully applied where the G 2 wound

wound was given; and tho' I am no nurse, tho' I have been the contrary of one to you, I hope we should wait upon you with more tenderness, than when you were here last. Mrs. Power would nurse you, and I would talk to you of the love of Jesus as well as I could.

You know that I perceived your bodily weakness when you were here, and charged you with
what you charge me with, "a neglect of your
body." If I was right, I hope you will follow
yourself the advice you give me:—I am sure you
will:—the burnt child will dread the fire for the
time to come.

With regard to kneeling, you must consider what your body can bear, without inconvenience to your health. To recover that, is your outward calling now: therefore, so split the hair between the indolence of nature and the weakness of your body, that neither of the two may be increased.

Offer yourself to God for life or death, for ease or pain, for strength or weakness. Let him chuse and refuse for you; only do you chuse him for your present and eternal portion. I want you to be a little bolder in venturing upon the bosom of our Lord: we lofe, (I for one,) much sweetness, and many degrees of holiness, in being shy of the Friend, the loving Friend of finners. Pray, for God's fake, don't forget that your Physician is your Husband. The joy of the Lord, as well as his peace, is to be your frength. Love is the paffion that wants to be flirred: do it in all calmness, _ I will love him, I do love him a little, I shall · love him much, because he has first loved me, " &c:" Ply, I pray you, this sweet gospel task. Accustom yourfelf to look upon your body as the temple of the Holy Ghoft, and meet him in your heart by fimple recollection, and a fleady belief of these gospel truths, " He is here," " he is in oh represent to me,

tl

to

me, &c:" nor do you let them go for any thing you do feel, or you do not feel. May God bless, comfort, establish, and raise you! Farewell.

J. F.

To Mis IRELAND.

My very dear Friend, Madeley, July-1766.

of your health, and his apprehensions of not feeing you any more, before that solemn day when all people, nations, and tongues shall stand together at the bar of God, make me venture, (together with my love to you) to send you a few lines; and my earnest prayer to God is, that they may be blessed to your soul.

First, then, my dear friend, let me beseech you not to flatter yourself with the hopes of living long here on earth. These hopes fill us with worldly thoughts, and make us backward to prepare for our change. I would not, for the world, entertain fuch thoughts about myself. I have now in my parish, a young man, who has been these two years under the surgeons hand. Since they have given him up, which is about two months ago, he has fled to the Lord, and found in him, that faving health which furpaffes a thoufand times, that which the furgeons flattered him with; and he now longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. To fee the bridge of life cut off behind us, and to have done with all the thoughts of repairing it to go back into the world, has a natural tendency to make us venture forward to the foot of the cross.

adly. Consider, my dear, how good the Lord is to call you to be transplanted into a better world before you have taken deeper root in this sinful world: and, if it is hard to nature to die now, how much harder, do you think, it would be, if

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you lived to be the mother of a family, and to cleave to earth by the ties of many new relations, schemes of gain, or prospects of happiness?

3dly. Reflect, by your illness, the Lord, who forecasts for us, intimates long life would not be for his glory, nor your happiness. I believe, he takes many young people from the evil to come, and out of the way of those temptations, or misfortunes, which would have made them mise-

rable in time and in eternity.

witness the hundreds of miles he has gone for the bare prospect of your health: But, my dear, your heavenly Father loves you a thousand times better; and he is all wisdom, as well as all goodness. Allow, then, such a loving, gracious Father, to chuse for you; and, if he chuses death, acquiesce, and say, as you can, "Good is the will of the Lord, his choice must be best!"

5thly. Weigh the finfulness of sin, both original and actual, and firmly believe the wages of sin, is death. This will make you patiently accept the punishment; especially, if you consider, that Jesus Christ, by dying for us, has taken away the sting of death, and turned the grave into a passage

of a bleffed eternity.

Redeemer. "He hath delivered us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He hath quenched the wrath of God in his atoning blood. By his atoning blood, by his harmless life, and painful death, he has satisfied all the demands of the law, and justice of God; by his resurrection he afferted the full discharge of alt our spiritual debts; by his ascension into heaven, where he is gone to prepare us a place, he has opened a way to endless glory. By his powerful

intercession, and the merits of his blood, which plead continually for us, he keeps that way open; and to encourage us, he affures us, "He is the way, the truth, and the life, and that, he who comes to him, he will in no wife cast out." He mildly offers rest to the heavy laden, pardon to the guilty, strength to the feeble, and life to the dead. You know his words, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth on me, shough he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die."

7thly. When you have confidered your lost state, as a sinner by nature, together with the greatness, the sulness, the freeness, and suitableness of Christ's salvation; and when you have diligently viewed the glories and charms of his person, believe in him. Without any ceremony, chuse him for your Physician, your Husband, and your King. Be not assaid to venture upon and trust in him; cast yourself on him in frequent acts of reliance, and stay your soul on him by means of his promises. Pray much for faith, and be not assaid of accepting, using, and thanking God for a little. The smoking stax he will not quench; only pray hard that he would blow it up into a blaze of light and love.

8thly. Beware of impatience, repining, and peevifuness, which are the sins of sick people. Be gentle, easy to be pleased, and resigned as the bleeding Lamb of God. Wrong tempers indulged,

grieve, if they do not quench, the Spirit.

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othly. Do not repine at being in a strange country, far from your friends; and, if your going to France does not answer the end proposed to your body, it will answer a spiritual end to your foul. God suffers the broken reeds of your acquaintance to be out of your reach, that you may not catch at them, and that you may, at once, cast

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your lonesome soul on the bosom of Him, who fills heaven and earth.

for read, and meditating, do not consult feeble, fainting, weary flesh and blood; for at this rate, death may find you idle, and supine, instead of striving to enter in at the strait gate; and when your spirits and vigour fail, remember, that the Lord is the strength of your life, and your portion for ever. O death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, thro' Jesus

Christ our Lord!

Many pray hard for you, that you may acquit yourself living or dying, in ease or in pain, as a wife virgin, and as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; but, above all, Jesus, the Captain of your salvation, and the High Priest of your profession, intercedes mightily for you. Look to him, and be saved, even from the ends of France. To his pity, love, and power, I recommend you. May he bless you, my dear friend,—lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace and courage, repentance, faith, hope, and patient love, both now and evermore! I am your affectionate, fincere friend, and servant in Jesus, J.F.

To James Ireland, Efq.

Madeley, July - 1766.

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My very dear Friend,

YOUR absence made me postpone thanking you for all the kindness you shewed me when at Bristol; and, to lay me under still greater obligations, you have sent me a hamper sull of wine, and broad cloth; as if it were not a enough to adorn and cover the outside, but you must also warm and nourish the inside of the body.

To this you have added a kind, but melancholy letter from Dover. Melancholy, I say, as well as kind, by the account it gives of the worldliness of our Protestant brethren abroad, and of the little hope you have of feeing your daughter again. My reason for not answering it immediarely, was the hope of fending by fome friends going to Briftol; and now, I have the opportunity of telling you, without farther delay, that you should have a little mercy on your friends, in not loading them with fuch burdens of beneficence. How would you like to be loaded with kindnesses you could not return? Were it not for a little of that grace, which makes us not only willing, but happy to be nothing, to be obliged and dependant, your present would make me quite miserable. But the mountains of divine mercy, which press down my foul, have inured me to bear

the hills of brotherly kindness.

I fubmit to be clothed and nourished by you, as your fervants are, without having the happiness of serving you. To yield to this is as hard to friendship, as to submit to be faved by free grace, without one scrap of our own righteousness. However, we are allowed, both in religion and friendship, to ease ourselves by thanks and prayers, till we have an opportunity of doing it by actions. I thank you then, my dear friend, and pray to God, that you may receive his benefits as I do yours !- Your broad cloth can lap me round two or three times; but the mantle of divine love, the precious fine robe of Jesus's righteousness, can cover your foul a thousand times. The cloth, fine and good as it is, will not keep out a hard shower; but that garment of falvation will keep out even a shower of brimstone and fire. Your cloth will wear out, but that fine linen, the righteoufness of the faints, will appear with a finer luftre the more it is worn. The moth may fret your present, or the taylor may spoil it in cutting; but the present, which Jesus has made you, is out of the reach. G 5 of

of the spoiler, and ready for present wear; nor is there any fear of cutting it out wrong; for it is seamless, woven from the top throughout, with the white unbroken warp of thirty-three years perfect obedience, and the red west of his agony

and fufferings unto death.

Now, my dear friend, let me beseech you to accept of this heavenly prefent, as I accept of your earthly one. I did not fend you one farthing to purchase it; it came unsought, unasked, unexpected, as the Seed of the woman; and it came just as I was sending a taylor to buy me some cloth for a new coat; immediately I stopt him, and I hope when you next fee me, it will be in your present.-Now let Jesus see you in his. Walk in white, adorn his gospel, while he beautifies you with the garment of salvation. Accept it freely; wear no more the old rufty coat of hature and felf-righteoufness,—fend no more to have it patched, make your boaft of an unbought fuit, and love to wear the livery of Jesus. You will then love to do his work; it will be your meat and drink to do it; and that you may be vigorous in doing it, as I shall take a little of your wine for my stomach's fake, take you a good deal of the wine of the kingdom for your foul's fake. Every promise of the gospel is a bottle, a cask that has a spring within, and can never be drawn out. But draw the cork of unbelief, and drink abundantly, O beloved, nor be afraid of intoxication; and if an inflammation follows, it will only be that of divine love.

I beg you will be more free with the heavenly wine, than I have been with the earthly, which you fent me. I have not tasted it yet, but whose fault is it? Not yours certainly, but mine. If

^{*} Mr. Fletcher's generous friend had kindly requested him not to fend his coat to be patched; hence this ingenious and affectionate reply.

you do not drink daily, spiritual health and vigour, out of the cup of falvation, whose fault is it? Not Jesus's, but yours! for he gives you his righteoulnels to cover your nakednels, and the confolations of his Spirit to cheer and invigorate your foul. Accept and use. Wear, drink, and live to God. That you may heartily and constantly do this, is my sincere prayer for you and yours; especially your poor daughter, whom I trust you have refigned into the hands of him, to whom she is nearer than to you. The wise Dispoler of all things knows what is best for her. The hairs of her head, much more the days of her life, are all numbered. The Lord often destroys the body, that the foul may be faved: And if this is the case here, as one may reasonably hope, you will not fay unto the Lord, "What doest thou?" But fay with the father, who lost two. fons in one day, "It is the Lord, let him do whatfoever he pleafeth;" or with him, who lost ten children at one stroke, "The Lord gave, and! the Lord taketh away, and bleffed be the Name: Adieu, J. F. of the Lord!"

To Mils Harron:

Madeley, July 17, 1766.

My very dear Friend,

I Want to hear of you, if I cannot hear from you by a line. The last account I had of your state of health was a very poor one. What hath:

the Lord done for your body fince?

My dear friend, we are all going the way of all flesh; and the you are more sensible of the journey in your body than I am at present, yet I follow you, or perhaps you follow me. I often feel a desire to bear your load for you; but the impossibility of this makes me rejoice, that Jesus, who does not faint as I might do, will, and does to carry.

carry both you and your burden. By a firm. unshaken faith, you know, we cast our souls upon Jesus, and by that power, whereby he is able to fubdue all things to himself, he receives and bears

that which we commit to him.

That this faith may be the firmer on our part, let it be rational as well as affectionate; affectionate as well as rational. God is good: He does not want us to take his word without proof. What expectations of the dear Messias from the beginning of the world! What amazing chains of miracles and wonders were wrought in favour of that people and family, from which he was to come! What prophecies fulfilled, that we might rationally believe! What displays of the Godhead, in that heavenly Man, Christ Jesus! In him dwelt, of a truth, the fulness of the Godhead bodily .- You fee the power of God in his miracles; the goodness of God in his character; the justice and mercy of God in his death; the truth, and faithfulness, and glory of God in his refurrection, in the coming of his Spirit, and the preaching of his everlasting gospel. O, my friend, we may believe rationally: We may with calm attention view the emptiness of all other religions, and the fulness, of affurance that ours affords.-And shall we not believe affectionately also? Let us stir up ourselves to love this Jesus, who hath given himfelf to us with all his blood, all his grace, and all his glory. Come, give him your whole foul, my dear friend, and take him with all his pardons, all his love, all his strength. If he wants you to embrace him in his faint, bloody fweat, or in his wracking tortures on the crofs, draw not back;love him, love him, and let not the grave frighten you: It is good to drop our clay in his quiet fepulchre, and to follow him on the wings of faith and love, without a clog of fickly flesh, to heaven. " He died for us, and rose again, that, whether we live or die, we might be together with him: To us to live is Christ, and to die gain. He hath blotted out"—.

I am happily interrupted by your kind letter. Blessed be God, for the prospect of recovery you mention! All is well that Jesus does: Sick or

well, living or dying, we will be Jefus's.

With regard to your complaint of flothfulness, your body cannot bear the strong exertions of a wrestling faith: Therefore, you are called, I apprehend, with a calm consent to accept of the gospel tidings, and, with the quietness of a child at the breast, to suck the milk of divine consolation. Inward, loving, believing recollection and resignation is the path, into which our dear heavenly Friend wants now to lead you. Be faithful, be bold, to follow where he leads: Make no words,—no unbelieving words, and all will be well. Farewell in body and soul.

To Miss HATTON.

My dear Friend, Madeley, July 28, 1766,

Hear still a very indifferent account of your health. I stand in doubt as to your bodily life; but it is in the hand of Jesus, and Jesus is wise, Jesus is good, Jesus is almighty: He will, therefore, dispose of you for the best. While you see the scales hovering, and it may be that of life slowly descending towards a quiet grave, calmly look at Jesus; and when the seebleness of your spirits prevents you from crying out, in extatick love, "My Lord and my God!" let your devoted, resigned, patient heart, still whisper "Thy will be done!"

Your last letter raised my hopes of your recovery; Mr. Perry, who saw you since, damps them again: But, "whether we live, we live to the Lord, or whether we die, we die to the Lord. Not for works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saveth us: Glory be to God for his unspeakable gift! Jesus remembers you in his all-prevailing intercession,—and, I might add, I do in my prayers, if the weight of a dancing mote described to be mentioned, after that of an immense mountain. I am, with Christian respects to our kind loving friends at Wern, your poor Madeley friend, I. F.

To Miss HATTON.

My dear Friend, Madeley, July 30, 1766.

O you are likely to be at rest sits! Well, the Lord's will be done; I should be glad to have you stay to help us to the kingdom of God; but if God wants to take you there, and house you before a storm, I shall only cry,—"One of the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof,"—and try to make the best of my way after you.

A calm receiving of the gospel tidings, upon a conviction of your loft effate, with suitable tempers, is a fign that you are in a safe state; but I want you altogether in a comfortable one. Your business, I appprehend, is not to turn the dunghill of nature, but to fuck the gospel milk :: Dwell much, if not altogether, upon "free justification, thro' the redemption that is in Christ Jefus." \ jew the fufficiency, fulness, suitablenefs, freenefs of his atonement and righteoufnefs; and hide yourfelf without delay under both. Look: at death only as a door to let you out of manifold: infirmities and pains, into the arms of Jesus, your heavenly Bridegroom. Stir up faith, hope, and love; that is trimming your lamp. Since last Monday, I find the burden of your foul upon mine in a very particular manner, and I hope that I shall not cease to pray for you, that you may go not only calmly, but joyfully, the way of all flesh. I have

I have got some praying souls to share with me in that profitable work, and I hope you will meet our spirits at the throne of grace as we do yours.

Let me have the comfort of thinking, that you are with your Physician, Husband, and All; who will order all things for the best. Pray hard, believe harder, and love hardest. Let the cry of your soul be, "None but Jesus living, none but Jesus dying," Let Christ be your life, and then death, whether it comes sooner or later, will be your gain.

Mr. Glazebrook waits for these lines, and I conclude by again entreating you to believe. Only believe, said Jesus to the Ruler,—and saith will work by love, and love by a desire to depart and to be with Christ. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless, uphold, and comfort you! Farewell, and forget not to pray for your helpless friend,

To Miss

My very dear Friend,

HE providence of our good God brought me I fafe here last Thursday, loaded with a fense of your excessive kindness, and my excessive unworthiness of it. Your Araunah-like spirit shames and diffresses it am not quite satisfied about your evafions with respect to the bill; and tho' I grant it more bleffed to give than to receive, I think you should not be so selfish as to engross all that bleffedness to yourself. Nevertheless, I drop my upbraidings not to lofe that time in them which I should fave to thank you, and to praise Jesus. I thank you, then, for all your favours, but above all for your fecret prayers for a poor, unworthy, unprofitable wretch, who deferves neither the name of a Minister, nor of a Christian. If you are fo kind as to continue them, (which I earnestly

what wout feeling

beg you will,) I befeech you pray, that I may have power to tarry at the footstool of divine mercy for a day of Pentecost, till I am endued with power from on high for the work of the ministry, and

the bleffings of Christianity.

I know not whether I am wrong in this respect, but I expect a power from on high to make me what I am not,—an instrument to shew forth the praises of the Redeemer, and to do some good to the souls of my fellow creatures. Until this power comes, it appears to me that I spend my paltry strength in vain, and that I might as well sit still. But I know I must keep rowing the the wind be contrary, till Jesus come walking upon the waters,

tho' it were in the last watch of the night.

You fee that while you praise on the top of the mountain, I hang my untuned harp on the mournful willow at the bottom. But lefus was in Gethsemane as well as on Fabor, and while he blesses you, he sympathizes with me. But this is speaking too much about felf; good and bad felf must be equally denied, and He that is the fulness of Him who fills all in all, must fill my thoughts, my defires, my letters, and my all. Come then, Lord, come and drop into our fouls as the dew into Gideon's fleece: Drop thy bleffing on thefe lines, and may thy fweet Name, Jesus, EM-, MANUEL, GOD WITH US, be as ointment and rich perfumes poured upon my dear Sister's foul! Spread thy wings of love over her; reward her an hundred fold in temporal and spiritual bleffings, for the temporal and spiritual mercies she hath bestowed upon me as thy fervant; and vouch afe to make and keep me fuch!

I want you to write to me what you think of the life of faith, and whether you breathe it without interruption; whether you never leave that rich palace,—Christ, to return to that dungeon, felf: what your feelings are when faith is at its lower ebb, and when it acts most powerfully? I should be glad also if you would answer these questions: What views have you of another world? What fense have you of the nearness of Christ? What degree of fellowship with the souls nearest your heart? What particular intimations of the will of God in intricate affairs, and material steps? And whether you can reconcile the life of faith

with one wrong temper in the heart?

If you are to good as to answer these questions at large, you will oblige me more, than if you were to fend me 200 waiftcoats and as many pair of stockings .- Jesus, is life, love, power, truth, and righteoufness. Jesus is ours; yea, he is over all, thro'all, and in us all. May we fo fathom. this mystery, and so evidence the reality of it, that many may fee, and fear, and turn to the Lord! My kind love and thanks wait upon your Sisters, &c. Farewell in Jesus. Pray for your obliged, unworthy fervant, which is J. F. ... mg too much should felt, you and but felt must be

will do about To Mifs HATTON. Denneb virgupa var lendguade from La.

many said . Has to be Madeley, Sept. 1766,

My very dear Friend,

into Cittegn's Reece OD wonderfully supports your tottering clay, I that he may fill up what is lacking in your faith. Concur with the merciful defign; arise in spirit, shake off the dust of earthly thoughts, put on your glorious apparel, -put on every moment. the Lord Jesus Christ. Dare to believe, -on Christ lay hold; wrestle with Christ in mighty, or even in feeble, prayer. He breaks not the bruifed reed; let the reed be grafted, by simple faith, in the true vine, -in the tree of life, and it will bring forth glorious fruit; not only refignation, but power to welcome the King difarmed of his terrors, and turned into a meffenger of joy, and a guide, under Christ, to heavenly happiness.—
Let not one feeble breath pass, without carrying an act of desire, or of faith towards Christ. Bestir yourself to lay hold on God, and when you find an absolute want of power, be you the more careful to lie at the feet of Him, who hath all power given him in earth and heaven for your. Farewell, my dear friend, that is, be found in Christ; for there only can we fare well, whether we live or die.

J. F.

To Mis Hatton.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Jan. 9, 1757.

THE alteration for the worst I discovered in your health, the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you, makes me sit down to take a survey with you of our approaching dissolution. The dream of life will soon be over; the morning of eternity will soon succeed. Away then with all the shadows of time. Away from them to the Eternal substance,—to Jesus, the sirst and the lost, by whom, and for whom, all things consist.

We stand on the shore of a boundless ocean: death, like a lion, comes to break our bones: let us quietly strip ourselves of our mortal robes, that he may do with us, as the Lord shall permit. In the mean while, let us step into the ark; Christ is the ark. My dear friend, believe in Jesus: believe that your fins, red as crimson, are made white as snow, by the superior tincture of his blood. Believe yourself into Christ. By simple faith, believe that he is your everlasting Head; nor can you believe a lie, for God hath given that dear Saviour to the worst of simmers, to be received by a lively saith: and hath declared, that it shall be done unto us, according to our faith. If you simply take Jesus to be your head, by the mystery of faith,

you will be united to the refurrection and the life. The bitterness of death is past, my dear friend. Only look to Jesus: he died for you,-died in your place,-died under the frowns of Heaven, that we might be spared. Stand, then, in him; be found in him; plead that he hath wrought a finies righteousness for you, and hath more than sufficiently atoned for you by his cruel sufferings and ignominious death. Regard neither unbelief nor doubt; fear neither fin nor hell: chuse neither life nor death: all these are swallowed up in the immensity of Christ, and triumphed over in his erofs. Believe, that he hath made an end of fin, that you are comely in him, that you are pardoned, accepted, and beloved of God, in the one Mediator, Jesus Christ. Reason not with the law, but only with Him, who favs, Come, and let us reafor together; the your fins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as fnow. Fight the good fight of faith. Hold fast your confidence in the atoning, fanctifying blood of the Lamb of God; thro' his blood the Accuser of the brethren is cast out. Confer no more with flesh and blood. Hunger and thirst after righteousness; eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Redeemer; and live in Christ, that you may die in him. Up, and be doing the work of God. Believe in Him, whom he hath fent: kiss the Son lest he be angry; grasp him, as one who hath fallen into deep waters, grafps the branch that hangs over him.

O flumber no more! Go, meet the Bridegroom. Behold he cometh! Trim your lamp; hold up the vessel of your heart to the streaming wounds of Jesus, and it shall be filled with the oil of peace and gladness. Quit yourself like a soldier of Jesus. Look back to the world, the things, and friends about you, no more. I entreat you, as a companion in tribulation, I charge you, as a minister, go, at every breath you draw, according to the grace and power given you, to the Physician, who gives no

body over,—that says, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise east out;" And, "He that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live."

Ere long there will be time no more. O my friend! flir up yourfelf to lay hold on him by faith and prayer; and let not those few fands, that remain in your glass, flow without the blood of Jesus. They are too precious to be offered up to flothful flesh, which is going to turn out its immortal inhabitant. Gladly refign your, dust to the dust whence it was taken, and your spirit to Him who gave and redeemed it. Look to him, in spite of flesh and blood, of fatan and unbelief; and joyfully fing the believer's fong, "O death, where is thy fling? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ! Let your surviving friends rejoice over you, as one faithful unto death,—as one triumphing in death itself.

I am just informed of dear Miss Fragena's death. She caught a fever in visiting the poor, sick of that distemper, and lived a week to stand and rejoice in dying pains. As she lived, she died,—a burning and a shining light. Ere long you will meet her in Abraham's bosom, whence she beckons you to follow her as she followed Christ. Be of good cheer, be not asraid: The same God, who helped her, will carry you through. Your business is to commend yourself to him,—and to keep safe that which you commit to him unto that day. To his faithfulness and love I commend you; and am, My dear friend, yours in him,—I. F.

To Mrs. HATTON.

Dear Madam, Madeley, Jan. 30, 1767.

Heard last night the news of Miss Hatton's death. As the stroke had long threatened you, and as she had, thro' mercy, long ago resigned herself

herself to it; I hope it hath not found you without the shield of resignation, patience, and considence in God. A sparrow, you know, falls not to the ground without his permission, much less can a member of his Son fall into the grave without his direction. Surely his widom is infallible: he hath chosen the better part both for you and your daughter; he hath chosen to take her out of her misery, to translate her to the place where the weary are at rest, and to give you, by removing her, an opportunity of caring for your soul, as

you cared for her body.

Now, what have you to do, Madam, but to put your hand upon your mouth, and fay, " It is the Lord; he gave, and he hath taken away; bleffed be his holy name!" If you forrow, let it be in hope of meeting her foon, all glorious within and without, whom you lately faw fuch a spectacle of mortality. David observed, (in the lesson for this morning,) that the love of Jonathan had been better to him than the love of women. O dwell much upon the confideration of the love of Jesus, and you will find that it far furpasses that of the most dutiful children: And comfort yourself by the believing thought, that Jesus lives, lives for you, and that your daughter lives in him; where you will foon have the joy to meet her as an incarnate angel.

I am, with prayers for you and Miss Fanny, to whom I wish much consolation in her elder, never dying Brother, Dear Madam, your unworthy obliged servant in Christ,

J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My very dear Friend, Madeley, Feb. 1767.

THE Lord will spare your daughter as long as she can get good, and do you and others good by the fight of her sufferings: When that cup is drunk

drunk up, the will be willing to go, and you to let her go. Remember the is the Lord's, much more than yours; and that what we call dying, is only breaking the shell of a troublesome body, that Christ may fully come at the kernal of the soul,

which he has bought.

Poor Mifs Hatton died last Sunday fortnight. full of ferenity, faith, and love. The four last hours of her life were better than all her fickness. When the pangs of death were upon her, the comforts of the Almighty bore her triumphantly thro', and some of her last words were, -"Grieve " not at my happines: - this world is no more to " me than a bit of burnt paper.—Grace! Grace! " A finner faved! I wish I could tell you half of what I feel and fee. - I am going to keep an " everlasting Sabbath.—O Death, where is thy " ffing? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks 4 be to God, who giveth me the victory, thro' my Lord Jesus Christ!" It is very remarkable, that the had hardly any joy in her illness, but God made her ample amends in her extremity. He kept the ffrongest cordial for the time of need; he does all things well. Bleffed, for ever bleffed, be his holy Name.

Worcestershire also lately lost a wife virgin of a truth, dear Miss Fragena, Mr. Biddulph's sister. The morning before she expired, she said, "I have had a stronger conflict last night, than I ever had in all my life; it was sharp and terrible; but Jesus hath overcome, and he will also overcome for you and me: be of good courage:

believe, hope, love, and obey."

I wish you had often such meetings as that you mention; every one should have as many thrusts at that crooked serpent, that boly Devil, Bigotry, as he can. If I can leave my parish, I believe it will be to accompany Lady Huntingdon to the Goshen of our land,—Yorkshire, to learn the love

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of Christ at the feet of my brethren and fathers there. I am obliged to you for the present you mention: I have taken again to the drink of my country, water, which agrees well with me, and I shall not want it for myself: if it is not sent, diminish or stop it according to this notice. Farewell in the Lord Jesus.

J. F.

To Mifs BRAIN.

Madeley, Feb. 1767.

Hope my friend Mr. Ircland will not grudge I me the room I take in this letter, to thank you for your last. It is travelling about, seeking its fortune, as well as the first; who knows but before it comes home, it will, like a baited hook, bring a fish along with it. I hope you go on and prof per, and do valiantly. I am glad to fee the Lord leads you in the exalted way of exulting faith. triumphant hope, and rapturous love: mount higher and higher: there is no fear of your lofing yourfelf, except it be in the boundless tracks of divine mercy, and on the eternal hills of redeeming love; and to be lost there, is to be happily found. I rejoice that you do not lose fight of the depth of human mifery and depravity, out of Jefus. With this ballaft, the strongest blasts of spiritual rapture will never overfet you. I also thank God, that your faith works by love, and that you love not in pen and word only, but in deed and in truth: fee that you abound herein more and more. As I' trust you love to do well to your neighbours bodies, fee that you use well that of a neighbour of mine, whose name is Brain, and put her in remembrance' to pray for her affectionate brother, and unworthy fervant,

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To Mr. James Ireland, Elq.

Madeley, March 30, 1767
My very dear Friend,

TESTERDAY I received your kind letter, and A your kind present about a month ago: It came fafe, and is alarge flock for the poor and me. The Lord return it you in living water; may it flow like a never failing stream through your foul, and those of all who are near and dear to you; that is, not only those who belong to your own household, but also to the household of faith. What a pleasure to love all! to be a well-wisher to all! I am glad you keep up your catholic meeting: a dozen of your way of thinking and acting would break the legs of that thief, Bigotry, who reviles the crucified members of the crucified Jesus. God, who vouchsafed to meet even Balaam, when he wentto curse Israel, will not fail to bless you, when you go to bless the scattered Ifrael of our Christ.

To return to your present; I return you my fincere thanks for it, as well as for all your former favours, and for your kind offers of new ones. I have one to ask now, which is, that you would stay your hand, and allow me to consume and wear out the old presents, without overcharging me with new ones. I do not say, stay your heart; no, let the oil of prayer flow from the cruise of your soul for me and mine, till our poor vessels are filled with the oil of humble love.

What you say about Miss Ireland's filling, puts me in mind of that worse disease of my heart, the dropsy of self. God gives me good physic and good sood, but instead of digesting both properly, self retains what it should not. I fill, instead of remaining empty for fresh food; I lose my appo-

traced first water from 1 to

operation. May the Lord fo tap us, that all our swellings may go down, and return no more! The good Samaritan, who is also a good Physician, wants to tap you spiritually by the bodily tapping of your daughter. To be cut in the fruit of our body is, sometimes, more painful than to be cut in our own body: may both she and you reap the fruit of the successful operation whenever it takes place! I am, with cordial affection, My dear Sir, your very much obliged, the very unworthy servant,

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

Madeley, April 27, 1767.

My very dear Friend,

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Have just received your letter, upon my arrival from Wales, with dear Lady Huntingdon, who is, of a truth, a tried stone, built upon the corner stone; and such as you have seen her, such, I am persuaded you will find her to the last,—a soul devoted to Jesus, living by faith, going to Christ himself by the scriptures, instead of resting in the letter of the gospel promises, as too many professors do.

I thank you for your care to procure not only a fupply for my church, but such an agreeable, acceptable, and profitable one as Mr. Brown: I know none that should be more welcome than he. Tell him, with a thousand thanks for his condescension, that I deliver my charge over to him fully, and give him a carte blanche, to do or not to do, as the Lord will direct him. I have settled it, that I should endeavour to overtake my Lady at Keppax in Yorkshire, against the Sunday after Whitsuntide.

I have just time to tell you, with regard to the Bristol journey, that I must come first from the Vol. IX. H. North

North, before I dream of going to the South-God help us to steer incessantly to the grand point of our salvation, Jesus the crucified: To him I recommend myself and you, and my noble guests. Love him, praise him, serve him, who hath loved you, bought you, and died for you.

I remain, &c.

J. F.

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To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, July 30, 1768.

INCERTAIN as I am, whether your daughter is yet alive, or whether the Lord hath called her from this vale of darkness and tears, I know not what to say to you on the subject, but this, that our heavenly Father appoints all things for the best. If her days of suffering are prolonged, it is to honour her, with a conformity to the crucified Jesus; if they are shortened, she will have drunk all her cup of affliction; and, I statter myself, that she has found, at the bottom of it, not the bitterness and the gall of her sins, but the honey and wine of our divine Saviour's righteousness, and the consolations of his Spirit.

I had lately some views of death, and it appeared to me in the most brilliant colours. What is it to die, but to open our eyes after the disagreeable dream of this life, after the black sleep in which we are buried on this earth? It is to break the prison of corruptible sless and blood, into which sin hath cast us; to draw aside the curtain, to cast off the material veil, which prevents us from seeing the Supreme Beauty and Goodness face to sace. It is to quit our polluted and tattered raiment, to be invested with robes of honour and glory; and to behold the Sun of Righteousness in his brightness, without an interposing cloud. On my dear friend, how lovely is death, when we look

look at it in Jesus Christ! To die, is one of

the greatest privileges of the Christian.

If Miss Ireland is still living, tell her, a thoufand times, that Jesus is the resurrection and the
life; that he hath vanquished and disarmed death;
that he hath brought life and immortality to light;
and that all things are ours, whether life or death,
eternity or time. These are those great truths
upon which she ought to risk, or rather to repose
her soul with full assurance. Every thing is shadow and a lie, in comparison of the reality of the
gospel. If your daughter be dead, believe in
Jesus, and you shall find her again in him, who
sills all in all, who encircles the material and
spiritual world in his arms, in the immense bosom
of his Divinity.

I have not time to write to Mrs. Ireland; but I entreat her to keep her promise, and to inform me what victories she has gained over the world, the sless, and sin. Surely when a daughter is dead or dying, it is high time for a father and a mother, to die to all things below, and aspire, in good earnest, to that eternal life, which God has given us in Jesus Christ. Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours, J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

Madeley, Oct. 14, 1768.

My very dear Friend,

Think I told you at Trevecka, that we had no farmers at Madeley, who feared God and loved Jesus. This generation among us are buried in the surrows of their ploughs, or under the heaps of corn which fill their granaries. Now that I am on the spot, I do not see one who makes it necessary for me to change my opinion: * Your bailist cannot come from this Nazareth.

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^{*} Thank God this is not now the character of all the farmers of Madeley! Emtor.

If the last efforts of the physicians fail with respect to Miss Ireland, it will at least be a confolation to you, to know that they have been tried. When the last reed shall break under her hand, that will be the great fignal to her to embrace the cross and the Crucified, the Tree of Life. and the fruits it bears, which give everlasting health and vigour. When we confider things with an evangelical eye, we discover that every thing dies. Things visible are all transitory; but inwisible ones abide for ever. If Christ is our life, and our refurrection, it is of little importance whether we die now, or thirty years hence: And if we die without embracing him by dying now, we shall have abused his mercies thirty years less, than if we had lived fo many years longer. Every thing turns out well, both life and death, our own, and that of those who are near to us.

Present my respects to your son, and tell him, that last week I buried three young persons of a malignant sever, who, on the second day of their illness, were deprived of their speech and senses, and, on the fifth, of their lives. Of what avail are youth and vigour when the Lord lists his singer? And shall we sin against the eternal power, the infinite love, the inexorable justice, and the immense goodness of this God, who gives us, from moment to moment, the breath which is in our nostrils? No—we will employ the precious gift in praising and blessing this good God, who

is our Father in Jesus Chrift.

I hope that you learn, as well as I, and better than I, to know Jesus in the Spirit. I have known him after the sless, and after the letter; I strive to know him in the power of his Spirit. Under the divine character of a quickening Spirit he is every where. All that live, live in him, and they who are spiritually alive have a double life. The Lord give us this second life more abundantly!

Yours, J. F.

To Miss IRELAND.

Madeley, Dec. 5, 1768.

My dear afflicted Friend,

Hear you are returned from the last journey your took in search of bodily health. Your heavenly Father sees sit to deny it you, not because he hateth you, (for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth) but because health and life might be fatalishares to your soul, out of which you could not escape, but by tedious illness, and an early death. Who knows also, whether by all you have suffered, and still suffer, our gracious Lord does not intend to kill you to the sless, our hearts are so stupid, and our insensibility so great, that the Father of our Spirits sees it necessary to put some of his sharpest, and longest thorns into our sless, to make us go to our dear Jesus for the balmy graces

of his Spirit.

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I believe fome are driven out of all the refuges of crafty, and indolent nature, only by the nearest, and last approaches of that faithful minister and servant of Christ, -Death. Of this I had a remarkable instance no later than last Monday. when God took to himself one of my poor afflicted parishioners, a boy of fifteen years of age, who was turned out of the infirmary two years ago as incurable. From that time he grew weaker every day by the running of a wound; but his poor foul did not gather strength. In many respects one would have thought his afflictions were lost upon him. He feemed to rest more in his sufferings, and in his patience under them, than in the Saviour's blood and righteousness. Being worn to a skeleton he took to his death bed; where I found him the week before last, with his candle burning in the focket, and no oil feemingly in the

vessel. I spent an hour in setting before him the greatness of his guilt in this respect, that he had been fo long under the rod of God, and had not been whipt out of his careless unbelief, to the bosom of Jesus Christ. He fell under the conviction, confessed that particular guilt, and began to call on the Lord with all the earnestness his dying frame would allow. This was on the Wednesday; and, on the Wednesday following, the God who delivers those that are appointed to die, set one of his feet upon the rock, and the next Sunday the other. He had chiefly used that short petition of the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come;" and spent his last hours in testifying, as his strength would allow, that the kingdom was come, and he was going to the King; to whom he invited his joyful, mournful mother to make the best of her way after him. Five or fix days before his death, my wicked, unbelieving heart might have faid, To what purpose hath God afflicted fo long, and fo heavily this poor worm? But the Lord shewed, that he had been all that while driving the spear of consideration and conviction, till at last it touched him in a sensible part, and made him cry to the Saviour in earnest. And who ever called upon him in vain? No one. Not even that poor indolent collier boy, who for two years would not fo much as cross the way to hear me preach. Yet how good was the Lord! because his body was too weak, to bear any terrors in his mind, he shewed him mercy without. The moment I heard him pray, and faw him feel after a Saviour, my fears on his account vanished; and tho' he had not been suffered to testify so clearly of God's kingdom, yet I should have had a joyful hope that God had taken him home.

Like the poor youth and myself, you have but one enemy, my dear friend,—an indolent, unbelieving heart; but the Lord hath driven it to a corner, to make you cry to him, who hath been waiting at the door all these years of trouble, to bring you pardon, peace, and eternal life, in the midst of the pangs of bodily death. Jesus is his name. Salvation and love are his nature. He is the Father of eternity,—your Father of course. All the love, that is in Mr. Ireland's breast, is nothing to the abyse of love, that is in your Creator's heart. A mother may forget her sucking child; but I will not forget thee, says he, to every poor distressed foul, that claims his help.

O fear not, my friend, to fay, I will arise and go to this Father, though I have sinned greatly against heaven, and in his fight. Lo, he rises, and runs to meet and embrace you. He hath already met you in the virgin's womb; there he did so cleave to your sless and spirit, that he assumed both, and wears them as a pledge of love to you.

Claim, in return, claim, as you can, his Blood and Spirit. Both are now the property of every dying finner, that is not above receiving, by faith,

the unspeakable gift.

Your Father has crossed the sea for you—Jesus has done more. He hath crossed the abyse, that lies between heaven and earth, between the Creator and the creature. He has waded thro' the sea of his tears, blood and agonies, not to take you to the physician at Montpelier, but to become your Physician and Saviour h mself—to support you under all your bodily tortures, to sanctify all your extremities, and to heal your soul by his multiplied stripes. Your father has spared no expence to restore you to health; but Jesus, who wants you in your prime, hath spared no blood in his veins, to wash you from your sins, write your pardon, and seal your title to glory.

O my friend, delay not cheerfully to furrender yourself to this good Shepherd. He will gladly lay you on the arm of his power, torn as you are

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with the bruises of fin and disease, and will carry you triumphantly to his heavenly sheepfold. Look not at your fins, without beholding his blood and righteousness. Eye not death, but to behold thro' that black door your gracious Saviour faying, Fear not, O thou of little faith; wherefore dost thou doubt?" Confider not eternity, but as the palace where you are going to enter with the Bridegroom of fouls, and rest from all your fins and miseries. View not the condemning law of God, but as made honourable by Him, who was a curse for you, and bore the malediction of the law, by hanging, bleeding, and dying on the curfed tree in your place. If you think of hell, let it be to put you in mind to believe, that the blood of God incarnate hath quenched its devouring flames. If you have no comfort, mistrust not Jesus on that account; on the contrary, take advantage from it to give greater glory to God, by believing, as Abraham did, "in hope against hope." And let this be your greatest comfort, that Jesus, who had all faith and patience, cried out for you in his dying moments—" My God, my God, why hast thou forfaken me!" As your strength will bear exertion, and his grace apprehended will allow, furrender yourfelf constantly to him as the purchase of his blood, and invite him earnestly to you as a poor worm perishing without him. this fimple, gospel way, wait the Lord's leifure, and he will comfort your heart. He will make all his goodness to pass before you here, or take you hence to shew you, what you could nor bear in fiesh and blood, the direct beams of the uncreated beauty of your heavenly Spouse.

I hope you take care to have little, or nothing else mentioned to and about you, but his praises and promises. Your tongue and ears are going to be filent in the grave;—now, or never, use them to hear and speak good of his name. Comfort

your weeping friends. Reprove the backfliders. Encourage feekers. Water, and you shall be watered. Death upon you makes you, through Christ, a mother in Israel. Arise, as Deborah. Remember the praying, believing, preaching, tho' dying thies: and be not afraid to drop a word for him who openeth a fountain of blood for you in his dying tortured body. Suffer, live, die, at his feet—and you will soon revive, sing, and reign in his bosom for evermore. Farewell in the Conqueror of death, and Prince of Life, J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Eriend, Madeley, March 26, 1769. THE Lord is defirous of making you a true disciple of his dear Son, the Man of forrows, by fending you affliction upon affliction. A fifter and a wife who appear to haften to the grave, in which you have lately laid your only daughter, places you in circumstances of uncommon affliction. But in this see the finger of Him, who works all in all, and who commands us to forfake all to follow him. Believe in him; believe that he does all for the best, and that all shall work for good to those who love him, and you shall see: the falvation of God; and, with your temptations and trials, he shall open a door of deliverance for you and yours. His goodness to your daughter ought to encourage your faith and confidence for Mrs. Ireland. Offer her upon the altar, and you shall see, that if it be best for her and you, his grace will fuspend the blow, which threatens you.

Your rich present of meal came last week, and shall be distributed to the pious poor agreeably to your orders, as a proof that Jesus, the liberal Jesus, the bread of life is indeed risen and lives in his members, who mutually aid and comfort

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each other. We are happy to receive your bounty, but you are more happy in bestowing it upon us; witness the words of Jesus-" It is more blessed to give, than to receive." Nevertheless, receive by faith the presents of the Lord, the gifts of his Spirit, and reject not the bread which cometh down from heaven, because the Lord gives it you with fo much love. Adieu. The God of peace be with you, and prepare you for whatever it shall

please him to appoint!

I shall be obliged to go to Switzerland this year or the next, if I live, and the Lord permits. have there a brother, a worthy man, who threatens to leave his wife and children to come and pay me a visit, if I do not go and see him myself. is some time since our gracious God has convinced him of fin, and I have by me some of his letters which give me great pleasure: This circumstance his more weight with me than the fettlement of my affairs. Yours,

To James Ireland, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, May 27, 1769. I Sympathize with you with all my heart, and I I pray that you may have patience and wisdom proportioned to your difficulties. You must take up your crofs, and pray in fecret, like a man whose earthly eisterns are broken on every side, and who hath need of confolation from feeling the fountain of living waters fpringing up in his foul unto eternal life. I have every moment need to follow the advice I give to you; but my carnal mind makes strong refistance. I must enter into life by death: I must be crucified on the cross of Christ, before I can live by the power of his refurrection. The Lord give us grace to die to ourfelves; for it is not enough to die to our relatives. Bleffed indeed, is that union with Jefus Christ, by which

which a believer can cast upon that rock of ages, not only his burdens, but himself,—the heaviest burden of all. O Lord, give us power to believe, with that faith which works by the prayer of considence and love! I am, &c. J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Dec. 30, 1769.

AST night I received your obliging letter, and am ready to accompany you to Montpelier, provided you will go with me to Nyon. I shall raise about twenty guineas, and with that sum, a gracious Providence, and your purse, I hope we shall want for nothing: If the Lord sends me, I should want nothing, tho' I had nothing, and tho' my fellow traveller was no richer than myself.

I hope to be at Bristol soon to offer you my fervices to pack up. You desired to have a Swiss fervant, and I offer myself to you in that capacity; for I shall be no more ashamed of serving you, as far as I am capable of doing it, than I am

of wearing your livery.

Two reasons, (to say nothing of the pleasure of your company,) engage me to go with you to Montpelier,—a desire to visit some poor Hugonots in the South of France, and the need I have to recover a little French, before I go to converse with

my compatriots.

The priest at Madeley is going to open his mass-house, and I have declared war on that account last Sunday, and propose to strip the Whore of Babylon and expose her nakedness to-morrow. All the Papists are in a great ferment, and they have held meetings to consult on the occasion. One of their bloody bullies came to "pick up," as he said, a quarrel with me, and what would have been the consequence had not I providentially had company with me, I know not. How far more their

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but I question whether it will be right for me to leave the field in these circumstances. I forgot to mention, that two of our poor ignorant churchmen are going to join the mass-house, which is the cause of my having taken up arms also. Farewell. Yours.

J. F.

To James Ireland, Efq.

My dear Friend, Trevecka, Jan. 14, 1770. I Know not what to think of our journey. My heart frequently recoils; I have lost all hopes of being able to preach in French, and I think if I could, they would not permit me. I become more stupid every day; my memory fails me in a furprifing manner. I am good for nothing, but to bury myself in my parish. I have those touches of misanthrophy which make solitude my element; judge then whether I am fit to go into the world. On the other hand, I fear that your journey is undertaken partly from compliance to me, and in consequence of the engagement we made to go together. I acquit you of your promise; and if your business does not really demand your presence in France, I beg you will not think of going there on my account. The bare idea of giving you trouble would make the journey ten times more disagreeable to me than the season of the year.

The day after I wrote to you, I preached the fermons against popery, which I had promised to my people: And Mr. S—t—r, called out several times in the church yard as the people went out of church, that, "there was not one word of truth in the whole of my discourse, and that he would prove it," and told me, that, "he would produce a Gentleman, who should answer my sermon, and the pamphlet I had distributed." I

was therefore obliged to declare in the church, that I should not quit England, and was only going into Wales from whence I would return soon to reply to the answer of Mr. S—t—r and the Priest, if they should offer any. I am thus obliged to return to Madeley, by my word so publicly pledged, as well as to raise a little money for my journey. Where it not for these circumstances, I believe I should pay you a visit at Bris-

tol, notwithstanding my misanthropy.

The hamper which you mention, and for which I thank you, provided it be the last, arrived three days before my departure; but not knowing what it was, nor for whom it was intended, I put it in my cellar without opening it. I want the living water rather than cyder, and righteousness more than clothes. I fear, however, lest my unbelief should make me set aside the fountain whence it flows, as I did your hamper. Be that as it may, it is high time to open the treasures of divine mercy, and to seek in the heart of Jesus for the springs of love, righteousness, and life. The Lord give us grace so to seek that we may find, and be enabled to say with the woman in the gospel, "I have found the piece of silver which I had lost."

If your affairs do not really call you to France, I will wait until Providence and grace, shall open a way for me to the mountains of Switzerland, if I am ever to see them again. Adieu. Give yourself wholly to God. A divided heart, like a divided kingdom, fall naturally, by its own gravity, either into darkness, or into sin. My heart's desire is that the love of Jesus may fill your soul, and that of your unworthy, and greatly obliged

fervant,

To Mr.

My dear Friend,

Y delay has, I hope, driven you to the Lord who is our Urim and Thummim, whose answers are infallibly true and just. Not so those of men: Nevertheless, the Lord generally helps us by each other: May he, therefore help you by these lines.

You got safe out of Egypt, with gladness, and now you seem entangled in the wilderness; but it may be needful for the trial of your saith, patience, self-denial, &c. that you should be left, for awhile, to seel your own barrenness. Therefore, hold sast what you have, till the Lord comes with more; equally avoiding discouraging thoughts, and slight indifference. Retire more inwardly, and quietly listen to what the Lord will say concerning you: Resusing creature comforts, and acting saith in God your Creator, Christ your Redeemer, and the Spirit your Comforter.

You have always a feeling, which, properly attended to, would make you shout, "I am, I am out of hell!" I beg that this wonderful mercy may not appear cheap to you: if it does, you have got up, and must come down; for it is proper that the Lord should bring down your spirit, and keep you upon crumbs, till you have learned to be

thankful for them.

At the first reading your letter, these things struck me, 1. You are wanting in the venture of saith: You do not give enough to that kind of implicit considence in Christ, which says, "I will trust in thee tho' thou slay me." Now this is a lesson which you must learn. Sink or swim, a believer must learn to cast himself headlong into the boundless sea of divine truth and love. 2. You have not learned to hold sast what you have, and to be thankful for it, till the Lord comes with

more: Till he baptizes you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. 3. You do not make a proper use of the joy of hope, which, nevertheless, is to be your strength till the Lord comes to his temple to make his abode there. Adieu. J. F.

To Mr. HENRY BROOKE.

Dear Sir, Madeley, Sept. 6, 1772.

TF to do was as present with me, as to wish. I you would have been half ruined in the postage of letters. I cannot tell you how often I have thought of thanking you for your kind letter. My controversy made me put it off some time, and when I was going one day to answer you, a clergyman called upon me, read your letter, faid you'. were a fensible author, and if I would let him have it, he would let me have your Fool of Quality, of which I had never heard. I forgot to take your direction, and my backwardness to writing had a very good excuse to indulge itself. However, it ceases now: After some months, my friend has fent me back your unexpected, but welcome favour. I know in what street you live; a thousand thanks for it; and a thousand more for the amiable character of your Harry, my kind, my new correspondent. May this sheet convey them warm from my heart to yours; and thence may they return like a thousand drops into that immense ocean of goodness, truth, love, and delight, whence come all the streams, which gladden the universe, and ravish the city of God.

I thankfully accept the pleasure, profit, and honour of your correspondence. But I must not deceive you. I have not yet learned the blessed precept of our Lord in respect of writing and receiving letters, I still find it more blessed to receive, than to give; and till I have got out of that selssishers, never depend on a letter from me till

you fee it, and be persuaded, nevertheless, that

one from you will always be welcome.

I fee, by your works, that you love truth, and that you will force your way through all the barriers of prejudice, to embrace it in its meanest drefs. That makes me love. I hope to improve by your example and your lessons. One thing L want truly to learn, that is, that creatures, and visible things are but shadows, and that God is God, Jehovah, the true eternal substance. To live practically in this truth is to live in the fuburbs of heaven. Really to believe, that in God we live, move, and have our being, is to find and enjoy the root of our existence: It is toflide from felf into our original principle, from the carnal into the spiritual, from the visible intothe invisible, from time into eternity. Give me, at your leifure, some directions, how to cease from bufying myfelf about the husk of things, and how I shall break through the shell till I come to the kernel of resurrection, life and power, that lies hid from the unbelievers fight. You mention, " A short sketch of your path already passed, and of your present feelings:" L believe it will be profitable to me for instruction and reproof; therefore, I shall gladly accept it.

Pray, my dear Sir, about feelings;—Are your possessed of all the feelings of your Clinton, Clement, and Harry? Are they natural to you, I mean, previous to what we generally call conversion? I have often thought, that some of the feelings, you describe, depend a good deal upon the fineness of the nerves, and bodily organs: and, as I am rather of a Stoic turn, I have, sometimes, comforted myself in thinking, that my want of feelings might, in a degree, proceed from the dulness of Swiss nerves. If I am not mistaken, Providence directs me to you to have this important question solved. May not some persons have

as much true faith, love, humanity, and pity, as others, who are ten times more affected, at least for a season? And what directions would you give to a Christian Stoic, if these two ideas are not absolutely incompatible. My stoicism helps me, I think, to weather out a storm of displeature, which my little pamphlets have raised against me. You see, I at once consult you as an old friend and spiritual casuist, nor know I how to testify better to you, how unreservedly I begin to be, my very dear friend, Yours in the Lord.

J. F.

To Mr. VAUGHAN.

Madeley, Feb. 11, 1773.

My very dear Friend,

YOUR kind letter I received in the beginning of the week, and your kind prefent at the end of it. For both I heartily thank you; nevertheless, I could wish it were your last present, for I find it more blessed to give than to receive, and in point of the good things of this life, my body does not want much, and I can do with what is more common, and cheaper than the rarities you ply me with.

Your bounty upon bounty reminds me of the repeated mercies of our God. They follow one another as wave does wave at fea; and all to waft us to the pleasing shore of confidence and gratitude, where we can not only cast anchor near, but calmly stand on the rock of ages, and defy the rage of tempests. But you complain, you are not there: billows of temptation drive you from the haven, where you would be, and you cry out still, "O

wretched man!" who shall deliver me?

^{*} Mr. Fletcher, when he wrote the above, mistook Mr. Henry Brooke, Junior, for Mr. Henry Brooke, Senior, the Author of the Fool of Quality.

Here I would ask, Are you willing, really willing to be delivered? Is your fin, is the prevalence of temptation, a burden too heavy for you to bear? If it is, if your complaint is not a kind of religious compliment, be of good cheer, only believe. Look up, for your redemption draws near. He is near that delivers, that justifies, that fanctifies you. Cast your foul upon him; an act of faith will help you to a lift, but one act of faith will not do; faith must be our life, I mean, in connection with its grand Object. You cannot live by one breath; you must breathe on, and draw the electrick, vital fire into your lungs, together with the air. So you must believe, and draw the divine power, and the fire of Jesu's love, together with the truth of the gospel, which is the bleffed element in which believers live.

My kind Christian love to Mrs. Vaughan.— Tell her, I am filled with joy in thinking, that though we no more serve the same earthly master, yet we still serve the same heavenly one; who will, ere long, admit us to sit with Abraham himself, if we hold fast our considence to the end.

Beware of the world. If you have losses, be not cast down, nor root in the earth with more might and main to repair them. If prosperity smiles upon you, you are in double danger.—Think, my friend, that earthly prosperity is like a coloured cloud, which passes away and is soon tost in the shades of night and death. Beware of hurry. Martha, Martha, one thing is needful. Chuse it, stand to your choice, and the good part shall not be taken from you by sickness or death. God bless you and yours with all that makes for his glory and your peace! I am, my dear Friend,

Yours, &c.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

Madeley, Sept. 21, 1773.

My very dear Friend,

Do not hear from my brother: my views of a journey abroad continue the fame. I have confidered what you fay about the translation of my Appeal; and, I think, I might from it take the hint, and do it some day: nay, I tried to turn a paragraph or two the day after I received your letter, but found it would be a difficult, if not an impossible work for me. I am sure I could not do it abroad. On a journey I am just like a cask of wine-I am good for nothing till I have fome time to fettle.

What you fay about Mr. Wesley adds weight to your kind arguments; but supposing he or the people did not alter his mind, this would not fufficiently turn the scale in point of conscience, tho' it is already turned in point of affection. My spiritual circumstances are what I must look at. I ambrought to a point: Like a woman with child, I must have a deliverance into the liberty of a higher dispensation, and I tremble lest outward things should hurt me. The multiplicity of objects, circumstances and avocations, which attend travelling, is as little fuited to my cafe, as to that of a woman with child. I think, that all things confidered, I should fin against my conscience in going, unless I had a call from necessity, or from clearer providences. Should Mr. Wesley find a defire of accompanying you, I think you might fet out with a fingle eye according to your light; and faith; and I trust the journey would be of fervice to both, and in that case my heart shall go along with you. If you go, pray find our, and converse with the Convulsionaries. My request is, that you may see your way plain, be fully perfuaded in your own mind, and be led and covered by the cloud of divine protection.

I thank you for having dared to speak a word for me at Worcester, but the stream of prejudice rantoo high for you to stop it: It was drowning yourfelf without saving your friend. It is good to

know when to yield.

My last Check will be as much in behalf of free grace as of holiness. So I hope, upon that plain, all the candid and moderate will be able to shake hands. It will be of a reconciling nature; and I call it an Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism.

I fee life fo short, and that time passes away with fuch rapidity, that I should be very gladto fpend it in folemn prayer; but it is necessary that a man should have some exterior occupa-The chief thing is to employ ourselves profitably. My throat is not formed for the labours of preaching: when I have preached three or four times together, it inflames and fills up; and the efforts which I am then obliged to make inspeaking heat my blood. That Lam, by nature, as well as by the circumstances I am in, obliged to employ my time in writing a little. O that B may be enabled to do it to the glory of God! Let us love this good God, "who hath fo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that we might not perifh, but have everlasting life. How sweet is it, on our knees, to receive this Jesus, this heavenly gift, and to offer our praises and thanks to our heavenly Father! The Lord's teaches me four lessons: the first is to be thankful that I am not in hell; the second to become nothing before him; the third, to receive the gift of God—the person of Jesus; and the fourth, is to feel my want of Jesus, and to wait for it. These four lessons are very deep: O when shall I have learned.

dearned them! Let us go together to the school of Jesus, and learn to be meek and lowly in heart. Adieu. J. F.

To James Ireland, Efq.

Madeley, Feb. 6, 17743 My dear Friend, IN the present circumstances it was a great piece of condescension in dear Lady Huntingdon to be willing to fee me privately: but for her to permit me to wait upon her openly, denotes such generolity, fuch courage, and a mind fo much superior to the narrowness that clogs the charity of most professors, that it would have amazed me, if every thing that is noble and magnanimous was not to be expected from her Ladyship. It is well for her that spirits are imprisoned in flesh and blood, or I might by this time (and it is but an hour fince I received your letter) have troubled her ten times with my apparition, to wish her joy of being above the dangerous fnare of professors the fmiles and frowns of the religious world; and to thank her a thousand times for not being ashamed of her old servant, and for cordially forgiving him all that is past, upon the score of the Lord's love, and of my honest meaning.

But tho' my mind has travelled so fast to Bath on reading your letter, yet an embargo is laid upon my body—" I must not go yet." I am the more inclined to take the hint for two reasons. I will tell you my heart about it. The more I see her Ladyship's generosity, and admire the faithfulness or the friendship that she has for many years homoured me with, the more I ought to take care not to bring burdens upon her. It might lessen her instruence with those she is connected with; and might grieve some of her friends, who possibly would look upon her condescension as an affront to them: This is the first reason. The second respects

Tpects myself. I must follow my light. A necessity is laid upon me to clear my conscience with respect to the Antinomian World, and to point out the stumbling block that keeps many ferious people from embracing the real doctrines of free grace. I cannot do this without advancing fome truths. which I know her Ladyship receives as well as myfelf, but which, by my manner of unfolding them, will at first fight, appear dreadful touches to the gospel of the day. I am just sending to the press "A Scriptural Effay upon the astonishing rewardableness of the works of faith." Tho' it confifts only of plain scriptures, and plain arguments, without any thing personal, I think it will raise more dust of prejudice against me, than my preceding publications. With respect to myself, I do not mind it, but I am bound in love to mind it with respect to her Ladyship. My respect to her Ladyship, therefore, together with the preceding reason, determine me to defer paying my respects personally to her, till after the publication of my Esfay, and Scripture Scales; and if she does not then revoke the kind leave she gives me, I shall most gladly make the best of my way to affure her in person, as I do now by this indirect means, that I am, and shall for ever be her dutiful fervant in what appears to me the plain gospel of our common Lord.

The smartness of the letter-writer in the West-minster Journal, and his bringing college charges against me, made me, think he was probably the Author of "The Whip for Pelagian Methodists." Well; after all, St. John's love will carry the day. If I have all faith, and have not that I am nothing: but when you plead for love, you plead for the chief work I contend for; so you are almost as deep in the mud, as I am in the mire. With love to yourself, and dutiful love to our noble friend.

I am, &c. J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Sir, Madeley, March 27, 1774.

Think I wrote my last two days before I re-Think I wrote my last the hoghead of rice ceived your bounty—a large hoghead of rice and two cheeses. Accept the thanks of our poor and mine on the occasion. I distributed it on Shrove Tuesday, and preached to a numerous congregation, on "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." May you and I find the bread we scattered that day, tho' it should not be till after many days. We prayed for our benefactor. that God would give him an hundred fold in this life, and eternal life, where life eternal will be no burden. I faw then, what I have not often feen on fuch occasions, gladness without the appearance of envying or grudging.

How kind is My Lady to offer to interpose, and to wipe of the aspersions off my London accusers. I had before sent my reply, which was only a plain narrative of two sacts, upon which it appeared to me the capital charges were sounded, together with some gentle exposulations which I hope have had the desired effect. Give my duty to the dear elect Lady, and thank her a thousand times for this new addition to all her former favours, till I have an opportunity of doing it in

person.

I get very flowly out of the mire of my controvers, and yet I hope to get over it, if God spares my life, in two or three pieces more. Since I wrote last, I have added to my Equal Check a piece, which I call An Essay on Truth, or A Rational Vindication of the Doctrine of Salvation by Faith, which I have taken the liberty to dedicate to Lady Huntingdon, to have an opportunity of clearing her Ladyship from the charge of Antinomianism.

tinomianism. I have taken this step in the simplicity of my heart, and as due from me, in my circumstances, to the character of her Ladyship. Mr. H—t—n called some time after the letter was printed, and told me, "It will not be well taken." I hope better; but be it as it will, I shall have the satisfaction of having meant well.

I have just spirit enough to enjoy my solitude, and to bless God that I am out of the hurry of the world—even the spiritual world. I tarry gladly in my Jerusalem, till the kingdom of God comes with power. Till then it matters not where I am: only as my chief call is here, here I gladly stay, till God sits me for the pulpit or the grave. I still spend my mornings in scribbling. Tho' I grudge so much time in writing, yet a man must do something, and I may as well investigate truth as do any thing else, except solemn prayer and visiting my slock. I shall be glad to have done with my present avocation, that I may give myself up more to those two things.

O how life goes! I walked, now I gallop into eternity. The bowl of life goes rapidly down the steep hill of time. Let us be wise: embrace Jesus and the resurrection; let us trim our lamps, and give ourselves afresh to him that bought us, till we can do it without reserve. Adieu. J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My very dear Sir, Madeley, Jan. 1775.

I Thank you for your letter, and your very friendly postscript to your brother's. I am glad you did not altogether disapprove my Essay upon Truth. The letter I grant profiteth but little, until the Spirit animates it. I had, some weeks ago, one of these touches, which realize or rather spiritualize the letter, and it convinced me more than

than ever, that what I fay, in that tract, of the

Spirit and of faith is Truth.

I am also persuaded, that the faith and spirit which belong to persect Christianity, are at a very low ebb, even among believers. When the Son of man cometh to set up his kingdom, shall he find Christian saith upon the earth? Yes: but, I fear, as little as he sound of Jewish saith, when he came in the sless.

I believe you cannot rest either with the easy Antinomian, or the busy Pharisee. You and I have nothing to do, but to die to all that is of a sinful nature, and to pray for the power of an endless life. God make us faithful to our convictions, and keep us from the snares of outward things. You are in danger from musick, children, poetry; and I from speculation, controversy, sloth, &c. &c. Let us watch against the deceitfulness of self and sin in all their appearances.

What power of the Spirit do you find among the believers in London? What openings of the kingdom? Is the well fpringing up in many hearts? Are many fouls diffatisfied, and looking for the kingdom of God in power? Watchman, What of the night?—What of the day?—What

of the dawn?

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I feel the force of what you fay in your last, about the danger of so encouraging the inferior dispensation, as to make people rest short of the faith, which belongs to perfect Christianity. I have tried to obviate it in some parts of the Equal Check, and hope to do it more effectually, in my reply to Mr. Hill's Creed for Perfectionists. Probably, I shall get nothing by my polemic labours, but loss of friends, and charges of "novel chimeras" on both sides. I expect a letter from you on the subject: Write with openness, and do not fear to discourage me, by speaking your disapprobation of what you dislike. My aim is to be Vol. 1X.

found at the feet of all, bearing and forbearing, until truth and love bring better days. I am, Rev. and dear Sir, your most affectionate brother and son in the gospel,

J. F.

To the Rev. CHARLES WESLEY.

Madeley, Dec. 4, 1775.

My very dear Brother,

I See the end of my controversial race, and I have such courage to run it out, that I think it my bounden duty to run and strike my blow, and fire my gun, before the water of discouragement has quite wetted the gun-powder of my activity. This makes me seem to neglect my dearest corre-

spondents.

I am already so grey headed, that I wrote to my brother to know, if I am not fifty-six instead of forty-six. The wheel of time moves so rapidly, that I seem to be in a new element; and yet, praised be God, my strength is preserved far better than I could expect. I came home last night at 11 o'clock tolerably well, after reading prayers and preaching twice, and giving the sacrament in my own church, and preaching again and meeting a few people in society at the next market town.

The Lord is wonderfully gracious to me, and what is more to me than many favours, he helps me to fee his mercies in a clearer light. In years past, I did not dare to be thankful for mercies, which now make me shout for joy. I had been taught to call them common mercies, and I made as little of them, as apostates do of the blood of Christ when they call it a common thing. But now the veil begins to rend, and I invite you, and all the world, to praise God for his patience, truth, and loving kindness, which have followed me all my days, and prevented me, not only in the night watches

watches, but in the past ages of eternity. O how I hate the delusion, which has robbed me of so many comforts! Farewell. I am, &c. J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

Madeley, Feb. 3, 1776.

My very dear Friend,

TPON the news of your illness by Mr. G. I, and many more helped to pray, that you might be supported under your pressures, and that they might yield the peaceable fruit of righteoufness. We shall now turn our prayers into praises for your happy recovery, and for the support the Lord has granted you under your trial. May it now appear that you imitate David, who faid, "It was good for me that I was afflicted." Let people fay what they will, there are lessons which we can never learn but under the cross; we must fuffer with Christ, if we will be glorified with him. I hope you will take care that it may not be faid of you as it was of Hezekiah, "He rendered not unto the Lord, according to the benefit of his recovery." Let us rather fay, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" And may we fee the propriety and profit of rendering him our bodies and our fouls,—the facrifices of humble, praising, obedient love, and warm, active, cheerful thanksgiving.

A young clergyman offers to affift me; if he does, I may make an excursion some where this spring: where it will be I do not know. It may be into eternity, for I dare not depend upon tomorrow; but should it be your way, I shall inform you of a variety of samily trials, which the Lord has sent me,—all for good, to break my will

in every possible respect.

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My little political piece is published in London. You thank me for it before hand,—I believe it is the only thanks I shall have. It is well you sent them before you read the book; and yet, whatever contempt it brings upon me, I still think I have written the truth. If you did read my publications, I would beg you to cast a look upon that, and reprove what appears to you amiss; for if I have been wrong in writing, I hope, I shall not be so excessively wrong as not to be thankful, for any reproof candidly levelled at what I have written. I prepare myself to be like my Lord, in my little measure.—I mean, to be "despised and rejected of men.—A man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs,"—most reviled for what I mean best. The Lord strengthen you in body and soul, to do and suffer his will.

Adieu, J. F.

To Mr. VAUGHAN.

Dear Sir, Madeley, March 21, 1776.

YOUR barrel of cyder came safe as to the outside, and I hope as to the inside too. How could you think to make me such a present? But I must rather thank you for your love and generosity, than scold you for your excessive profusion. You should have stayed at least till cyder was ten shillings a hogshead, but in such a year as this—however, the Lord reward you, and return it to you, in streams of living water, and plenty of the wine of his kingdom!

I thought I should soon have done with controversy, but now I give up the hope of having done with it before I die. There are three sorts of people I must continually attack, or defend myself against.—Gallios, Pharisees, and Antinomians. I hope I shall die in this harness fighting against some of them. I do not, however, forget, that the Gallio, the Simon, and the Nicholas within, are far more dangerous to me than those without. In my own heart, that immense field, I must

I must first fight the Lord's battles and my own. Help me here, join me in this field. All Christians are here misitiamen, if they are not professed soldiers. O, my friend, I need wisdom—meekness of wisdom! A heart sull of it is better than all your cyder vault sull of the most generous liquors; and it is in Christ for us. O go, and ask for you and me, and I shall ask for me and you. What a mercy is it that our Lord bears stock! May we not be ashamed nor afraid to come, and beg every moment for wine and milk, grace and wisdom.

Beware, my friend, of the world: let not it's cares, nor the deceitfulness of it's riches keep, or draw you from Jesus. Before you handle the birdlime be sure to dip your heart and hand in the oil of grace. Time slies. Years of plenty and of scarcity, of peace and war, disappear before the eternity to which we are all hastening. May we see now the winged dispatch of time, as we shall see it in a dying hour; and by coming to, and abiding in Christ, our fortress and city of resuge, may we be enabled to bid desiance to our last Enemy. Christ has fully overcome him, and by the victory of the head, the living members cannot but be fully victorious.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Vaughan. That the Lord would abundantly bless you both, in your fouls, bodies, concerns and children, is the fincere wish of, Dear Sir, your affectionate friend, I. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

My dear Brother, Madeley, May 11, 1776.

WHAT are you doing in London? Are you ripening as fast for the grave, as I am?—

How should we lay out every moment for God! I have had for some days the symptoms of an inward consumptive decay,—spitting blood, &c. Thank God, I look at our last enemy with great I 3 calmness.

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calmness. I hope, however, that the Lord will spare me to publish my end of the controversy, which is "A double Differtation upon the Doctrines of Grace and Justice." This piece will, I flatter myself, reconcile all the candid Calvinists and candid Arminians, and be a means of pointing out the way, in which peace and harmony might be restored to the Church.

I still look for an outpouring of the Spirit, inwardly and outwardly. Should I die before that great day, I shall have the consolation to see it trom asar, like Abraham and the Baptist, and to point it out to those who shall live, when God

does this.

Thank God, I enjoy uninterrupted peace in the midst of my trials, which are, sometimes, not a few. Joy also I posses; but I look for a joy of a superior nature. The Lord bestow it when and how he pleafeth! I thank God, I feel myfelf in a good degree dead to praise and dispraise: I hope, at least, that it is so; because I do not feel that the one lifts me up, or that the other dejects me. I want to see a Pentecost Christian Church, and if it is not to be feen at this time upon earth, I am willing to go and fee that glorious wonder in heaven. How is it with you? Are you ready to seize the crown in the name of the Redeemer reigning in your heart? We run a race towards the grave. John is likely to outrun you, unless you have a swift foot. The Lord grant we may fink deeper into the Redeemer's grave, and there live and die, and gently glide into our own.

I had lately a letter from one of the preachers, who finds great fault with me, for having published, in my book on Perfection, your hymn called, "The last Wish." He calls it dangerous Mysticism. My private thoughts are, that the truth lies between driving Methodism and still Mysticism. What think you? Read the addresses which I

have added to that piece, and tell me your

thoughts.

Let us pray that God would renew our youth, as that of the eagle, that we may bear fruit in our old age. The Lord strengthen you to the last! I hope I shall see you before my death; if not, let us rejoice at the thought of meeting in heaven. Give my kind love to Mrs. Wesley, to my god-daughter, and to her brothers, who all I hope, remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Adieu.

I am, &c. J. F.

To Mr. CHARLES PERRONET.

Bristol, July 12, 1776.

My very dear Brother,

AVING an opportunity to write a line to I you by a friend, whom I meet daily at the Wells, I gladly embrace it to thank you for your last favour. The Lord keeps me hanging by a thread; he weighs me in the balance for life and death: I trust him for the choice. He knows, far better than I, what is best: And I leave all to his unerring wisdom. I am calm, and wait, with fubmission, what the Lord will say concerning me. I wait to be baptized into all his fulness. and trust the word-"the word of his grace." Afflictions and shakes may be a ploughing neceffary to make way for the heavenly feed, and to prepare me to bring forth fome fruit in life, and in death. Whether it be in the former or in the latter, I hope I shall live and die, the object of your love, and the subject of your prayers, as you are of the cordial affection and good wishes of, My very dear Friend, your devoted brother, and obliged companion in tribulation,

J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Aug. 18, 1776.

Y breast is always very weak, but, if it please God, it will in time recover strength. Mr. Greaves will take all the duty upon himself, and I shall continue to take rest, exercise, and the food which was recommended to me. The Lord grant me grace to repose myself on Christ, to exercise myself in charity, and to feed upon the bread of life, which God has given us in Jesus Christ. We all need this spiritual regimen: may we be enabled to observe it as strictly, as we do the bodily regimen of our earthly physicians!

I thank you, my dear friend, for all your favours, and all your attention to me. Your more than fraternal love covers me with confusion, and fills me with acknowledgment. What returns shall I make? I will drink the cup of thanksgiving, and I will bless the hame of the Lord; I will thank my dear friend, and wish him all the temporal bleffings he conferred upon me, and all those spiritual ones, which were not in his power to bestow. Live in health, -live piously, -live content,-live in Christ,-live for eternity,-live to make your wife, your children, your fervants, your neighbours happy, as far as their happiness depends on you; and may the God of all grace give back an hundred fold to you and your dear wife, all the kindnesses with which you have loaded me! The Lord make you happy as a father, a master, and a Christian! The God of peace be with you without interruption! Give me fome account of your health, and I will inform you of the alterations which take place in that of your obedient fervant and devoted friend,

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Aug. 24, 1776.

Have received the news of your loss, and of It the gain of your younger daughter. She has entered into port, and has left you on a tempestuous fea with Fanny. The account of her death did not furprize me: when you received that of her illness, this passage came strongly to my mind -" Two shall be in one house: one shall be taken. and the other left." I recommend to Mrs. Ireland the refignation of David when he lost his fon, and do you give her the example. The day of death is preferable to that of our birth: With respect to infants, the maxim of Solomon is indubitable. Oh what an honour is it to be the father and mother of a little cherubim, who hovers round the throne of God in heavenly glory !-Comfort yourselves, and rejoice that the Lord has taken one, and left the other.

R—q—t dead and buried! The jolly man who last summer shook his head at me, as at a dying man! How frail are we! God help us to live to day! to morrow is the fool's day. I am glad you encourage my hopes of finding some in Bristol, who will tarry, with one accord, for a pentecostal day of the Son of man. I meet with some, I hope, that feel a want of it; but my constant removals prevent my enjoying the benefit of waiting together in one place. When God shall be about to take away the reproach of his people, he will work a double miracle,—his grace will prepare their hearts, and his providence their outward cir-

I have not at prefent the least idea, that I am called to quit my post here. I see no probability of being useful in Switzerland. My call is here, I am sure of it; if then I undertook the journey,

cumstances.

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it would be merely to accompany you. I dare not gratify friendship by taking such a step; and so much the less, as I have no faith in the prescriptions of your physician; and I think that if health be better for us than fickness, we may enjoy it as well here as in France or Italy. If fickness be best for us, why shun it? Every thing is good, when it comes from God. Nothing but a baptism of fire, and the most evident openings of Providence can engage me in fuch a journey. If you believe that Providence calls you to make it, go and pass the Winter with Mr. Lee: the bare idea that the journey will do you good, may, by God's bleffing, be of fervice to you. If I reject your obliging offer to procure me a substitute, accuse not my friendship to you, but attribute it to my fear of taking a falle step, of quitting my post without command, and of engaging in a warfare, to which the Lord does not call me. My refusal wounds my friendship for you; but I hope it will not prevent your being persuaded, that I am, with lively gratitude, altogether yours in Jesus Christ. Adieu. J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My very dear Friend, Madeley, Sept. 7, 1776.

I Thank you for your kind letter, and am glad you will continue to oppose bigotry, tho' I would not have you bring a whole house about your ears, for the sake of so insignificant a creature as I am. As many, who espouse the sentiments of my opponents, condemn me without having heard me out, and upon the dreadful charges which they hear brought against me, they are not much to blame; for what good man can think well of a blasphemer, and an enemy to the gospel? I hope for my part, to do what shall be in my power to remove prejudices, and trust to gain some resignation

tion and patience, by what I shall not be able to remove. God is my witness, that I honour and love them, tho' I will never part with my liberty of exposing error, wherever I shall detect it. Why might I not endeavour to take off a spot from a friend's sleeve, without running the risk of losing

his friendship, and incurring his ill will?

My health is, I thank God, better than when I wrote last. I have not yet preached, rather from a sense of my duty to my friends, and high thoughts of Mr. Greaves's labours, (who does the work of an evangelist to better purpose than I) than to spare myself; for, if I am not mistaken, I am as able to do my work now, as I was a

year ago.

A fortnight ago I paid a visit to West Bromwich: I ran away from the kindness of my parishioners, who oppressed me with tokens of their love. To me there is nothing so extremely trying as excessive kindness. I am of the King's mind, when the people shewed their love to him on his journey to Portsmouth, "I can bear," he said, " the hiffings of a London mob, but these shouts of joy are too much for me." You, my dear friend, Mrs. Ireland, Mrs. Norman, and all your family, have put me to that fevere trial, to which all trials caused by the hard words that have been spoken of me are nothing. I return you all my warmest thanks, and pray that, excess excepted, you may all meet, in the day of your weakness, as kind nurses and benefactors as you have proved to me.

At our age a recovery can be but a fhort reprieve: let us, then, give up ourselves daily to the Lord, as people who have no confidence in the sless, and do not trust to to-morrow.—I find my weakness, unprofitableness, and wretchedness daily more and more; and the more I find them, the more help I have to fink into self-abhorrence.

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Nor do I despair to fink one day so in it, as to die to self, and revive in my God. Farewell.

J. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

Madeley, Sept. 15th, 1776. My very dear Brother,

Lately consulted a pious gentleman, near Litchfield, famous for his skill in the disorders of the breast. He affured me, I am in no immediate danger of a consumption of the lungs; and that my disorder is upon the nerves, in consequence of too much close thinking. He permitted we to write and preach in moderation, and gave me medicines, which, I think, are of service in taking off my severish heats. My spitting of blood is stopped, and I may yet be spared to travel

with you as an invalid.

If God adds one inch to my span, I see my calling. I defire to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified, revealed in the Spirit. I long to feel the utmost power of the Spirit's dispensation; and I will endeavour to bear my testimony to the glory of that dispensation, both with my pen and tongue. Some of our judicious, or inattentive friends, will probably charge me with nevelty for it; but be that as it will, let us meekly stand for the truth as it is in Jesus, and trust the Lord for every thing. I thank God, I feel fo dead to popular applause, that, I trust, I should not be afraid to maintain a truth against all the world; and yet I dread to diffent from any child of God, and feel ready to condescend to every one. O what depths of humble love, and what heights of gospel truth, do I sometimes see! I want to fink into the former, and rife into the latter. Help me by your example, letters, and prayers; and let us, after our forty years abode in the wilderness

derness with Moses and Joshua, break forth after our Joshua into the Canaan of pure love.

I am, &c. J. F.

To the Rev. VINCENT PERRONET.

Newington, Jan. 19th, 1777.

Dear Father in Christ,

Beg you would accept my multiplied thanks for your repeated favours. You have twice entertained me a worthless stranger; and not yet tired of the burden, you kindly invite me, weak and troublesome as I am, to share in the comforts of your house and family. Kind Providence leaves me no room, at present, to hang a third burden upon you. The good air and accommodations here, and the nearness to a variety of helps, joined to the kindness of my friends and the weakness of my body, forbid me to remove at present. God reward your labour of love and fatherly offers! Should the Lord raise me, I shall be better able to reap the benefit of your instructions—a pleasure, which I promise myself some time, if the Lord pleases.

I have of late thought much upon a method of reconciling the Calvinists and Arminians. I have seen some Calvinian ministers, who seem inclined to a plan of pacification. I wish I had strength enough to draw the sketch of it for your improvement. I think the thing is by no means impracticable, if we would but look one another in the sace, and fall together at the seet of Him, who makes men to be of one mind in one house, and made once all believers to be of one soul in the Church. Let us pray, hope, wait, and be ready to cast one mite of endeavour towards the blessing of a reconciliation; in which none could be more glad to second you, than, honoured and dear Sir, your affectionate, obliged son in the gospel,

To Miss Perronet.

Dear Madam, Newington, Jan. 19, 1777. Thank you for your care and kind nurfing of I me when at Shoreham; and, especially, for the few lines you have favoured me with. are fo much the more agreeable to me, as they treat of the one thing needful for the recovery of our fouls,—the spirit of power, of love, and of a found mind; together with our need of it, and the grand promise that this need shall be abundantly supplied,-supplied by a baptismal outpouring of that "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes us free from the law of fin and death." May we hunger and thirst after righteousness in the Holy Ghost, and we shall be filled. May we fo come to our first Paraclete, Advocate, and Comforter, as to receive the Second, as an indwelling and overflowing fountain of light, life, and love. My view of this mystery is, I trust scrip-The Father fo loved the world, as to give tural. us the first Advocate, Paraclete, and Comforter, whom we love and receive as our Redeemer. The first Advocate has told us, it was expedient that he should leave us, because in that case, he would fend another Advocate, Paraclete, or Comforter, to abide with us, and be in us for ever, as our Sanctifier, our Urim and Thummim, "our lights and perfections," our oracle and guide. This is the grand promife to Christians; -called "the promise of the Father," and bought by the Son. O may it be fealed on our hearts "by the Spirit of promise!" May we ever cry,

"Seal thou our breafts, and let us wear That pledge of love for ever there!"

Then we shall be filled with pure, perfect love; for the love of the Spirit perfects that of the Father and Son, and accomplishes the mystery of God

God in the believing foul. Come then, let us look for it; this great falvation draws nigh. Let us thank God more thankfully, more joyfully, more humbly, more penitently, for Christ our first Comforter; and hanging on his word, let us ardently pray for the fulness of his Spirit, for the indwelling of our fecond Comforter, who will lead us into all truth, all love, all power. Let us join the few, who befiege the throne of grace. and not give over putting the Lord in remembrance, till he has raised himself a Pentecostal Church again in the earth; I mean a Church of fuch believers as are all of one heart and one foul. Nor forget to ask, that, when you press into that kingdom and church, you may be followed by, Dear Madam, yours, &c.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

Newington, Jan. 29, 1777.

THANKS be to God, and to my dear Friend, for favours upon favours, for undeferved love, and the most endearing tokens of it I have received your obliging letters full of kind offers, and your jar full of excellent grapes. May God open to you the book of life, and seal upon your heart all the offers and promises it contains; and may the treasures of Christ's love, and all the fruits of the Spirit, be abundantly open to my dear friend and unwearied benefactor!

Providence fent me last Sunday Dr. Turner, who under God, saved my life twenty-three years ago in a dangerous illness; and I am inclined to try what bis method will do. He orders me asses milk, chicken, &c. forbids me riding, and recommends the greatest quietness. He prohibits the use of Bristol water; advises some waters of a purgative nature; and tries to promote expectoration by a method that so far answers, tho' I spit

by it more blood than before. It will be in order

to cure one way or other.

With respect to my soul, I find it good to be in the balance, awfully weighed every day for life or death. I thank God, the latter has lost its sting, and endears to me the Prince of Life. But O! I want Christ my refurrection to be a thoufand times more dear to me; and doubt not he will be fo when I am filled with the Spirit of wifdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. Let us wait for that glory, praifing God for all we have received, and do daily receive; and trufting him for all we have not yet received. Let our faith do justice to his veracity, our hope to his goodness, and our love to all his perfections. It is good to trust in the Lord, and his faints like well to hope in him. I am provided here with every necessary and convenient blessing for my state. The great have even done me the honour of calling-Mr. Shirley, Mr. Rowland Hill, Mr. Peckwell, &c. I exhort them to promote peace in the Church, which they take kindly. I hope, God will incline us all to peace living and dying. Lady Huntingdon has written me a kind letter alfo. O for universal, lasting kindness! world to me is now become a world of love. it be so to my dear friend also. My kindest love and thanks, wait on yourfelf, Mrs. Ireland, and all your dear family.

To Mr. GREENWOOD.

London, — 1777.

Y dear Companion in tribulation, and in the patience of Jesus. Peace be multiplied unto you, and resignation by the cross of Jesus. I bear your foot on my heart, and cast my heart on him, to whom all burdens are lighter than a feather. Paschal said, when the rod of tribula-

tion was upon him, "Now I begin to be a Christian," meaning, a follower of the man of sorrows. By his pierced feet may yours be eased. Hold this fast, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." Accept the rod as a token of your adoption; and be willing to be made perfect in patience by sufferings. In the mean time rejoice that Christ's sufferings are over,—that they are atoning.—and that they have purchased our comforts. If you can come safely to-morrow, you will bring a blessing to your poor pensioner, who remains in the bonds of grateful, brotherly love, Yours,

To Mr. James Ireland, Efq.

My dear Friend, Newington, Feb. 24, 1777.

ET us abandon ourselves without reserve to God, who is alike the God of all grace when he chastises, as when he blesses us. Be a son of Abraham,—be an imitator of God. Abraham refused not to offer up his Isaac, and God has delivered his only Son to death for us. Refuse nothing to this God of love and tender compassion. The facrifice of those things which are most precious to us, are the least unworthy of him; and had we a thousand Isaacs, we ought to keep back none from him. Perhaps the Lord hath heard your prayer and ours. If your Isaac lives, may he be devoted to the Lord as was Samuel; and may the God of Elijah have all the glory of his recovery. If he be dead, prepare to follow him, and do not envy him, the fweet repose which he enjoys, and in which we shall foon share with him.

Adieu. They forbid my writing, but I will write to the last, "Blessed be God who giveth us the victory over death, and its pains by Jesus Christ!" In him I am, and shall always be alto-

gether yours. I am your ten thousand times obliged Friend,

J. F.

P. S. Your fecond letter, which reached me when the above was written, informs me of your loss;—but why should I call God's securing your fon, and giving him eternal life, your loss? It is Christ's gain, who sees in that sweet child the travail of his childhood; and it is your fon's gain, fince his conflicts and dangers are now over, and nothing awaits him but an eternal increase of happiness. Who knows but what God, who foresees all the florms of corruption, and rocks of fin we are likely to meet with in the fea of life, has taken your dear child at the best, and by this premature death fecures him from eternal death? Come, then, do not repine. God has made you the instrument of adding one more little cherub to the heavenly hoft; and in this light you may well fay, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and bleffed be the name of the Lord!" He is better than ten sons. Your son is in his bosom, and this new cord should now draw you from earth to heaven with a fresh degree of power,—with an irrefistible attraction.

I thank you ten thousand times over for all your repeated marks of love and generosity to me and mine: The burden is too great to bear; I must cast it upon Him, who can bless you ten thousand times over, and turn all your seeming losses into the greatest blessings. May the God of all consolation help you to reap the earliest and ripest fruit of the affliction, whereby he gives you a new token of your adoption. Remember my kind love

and prefent my best thanks to Mrs. Ireland.

Yours, &c.

To Miss PERRONET.

My dear Friend, Newington, April 21, 1777.

Thousand thanks to you for your kind, comfortable lines. The prospect of going to see Jesus and his glorified members, and among them your dear departed brother, my now ever-living friend—this sweet prospect is enough to make me quietly and joyfully submit, to leave all my Shoreham friends, and all the excellent ones of the earth. But why do I talk of going to leave any of Christ's members, by going to be more intimately united to the Head?

"We all are one, who him receive,
And each with each agree;
In him the One, the Truth,—we live,
Blest point of unity!"

A point this, which fills heaven and earth,—which runs thro' time and eternity. What an immense point! In it sickness is lost in health, and death in life. There let us ever meet. There

to live is Christ, and to die gain.

I cannot tell you how much I am obliged to your dear brother, for all his kind, brotherly attendance as a physician. He has given me his time, his long walks, his remedies: he has brought me Dr. Turner several times, and will not so much as allow me to reimburse his expences. Help me to thank him for all his profusion of love, for I cannot sufficiently do it myself. My duty to your father: I throw myself in spirit at his feet, and ask his blessing, and an interest in his prayers. Tell him, that the Lord is gracious to me; does not suffer the Enemy to disturb my peace; and gives me, in prospect, the victory over death. Thanks be to God, who giveth us this great victory, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ! Absolute resignation

nation to the divine will baffles a thousand temptations, and confidence in our Saviour carries us sweetly thro' a thousand trials. God fill us abun-

dantly with both!

Thank dear Mrs. Bissaker for all her love to my dear departed friend; and may our kindred spirits drink deeper into God, till they are filled with all the sulness, which our enlarged souls can admit. Nor let your niece, to whom I send my thanks, keep aloof. Let us all tend to our original centre; and experience that life and death are ours, because the Prince of life, who is our resurrection and life, has overcome sin, death and the grave for you, and for your obliged, unworthy brother,

J. F.

To Mr. and Mrs. GREENWOOD.

Briflington, May 28, 1777.

MY very dear Friends, and Benefactors, Charles and Mary Greenwood.—My prayers shall always be, that the merciful may find mercy, and that the great kindness, I have found under your quiet roof, may be shewed you every where under the canopy of heaven. I think with grateful joy, on the days of calm retreat I have been bleffed with at Newington, and lament my not having improved better the opportunity of fitting, like Mary, at the feet of my great Physician. May he requite your kind care to a dying worm, by abundantly caring for you and yours, and making all your bed in your fickness! May you enjoy full health! May you hunger and thirst after righteousness, both that of Christ's, and that of the Holy Ghoft, and be abundantly filled May his rod and staff comfort you therewith. under all the troubles of life, the decays of the body, the affaults of the enemy, and the pangs of death! May the reviving cordials of the word of truth be ever within the reach of your faith,

faith, and may your eager faith make a ready and constant use of them; especially, when faintings come upon you, and your hands begin to hang down! May you stand in the clefts of the Rock of Ages, and there be safely sheltered, when all the storms of justice shall fall around! May you have always such temporal and spiritual helps, friends, and comforts, as I have found in your

pleasing retreat!

You have received a poor Lazarus, tho' his fores were not visible. You have had compassion. like the good Samaritan: you have admitted me to the enjoyment of your best things; and he, that did not deferve to have the dogs to lick his fores, has always found the members of Jefus ready to prevent, to remove, or to bear his bur-And now, what shall I say? What but, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!" And thanks be to my dear friends for all their favours! They will, I trust, be found faithfully recorded in my breast, "when the great Rewarder of those, who diligently seek him, will render to every man according to his works.". Then shall a raifed Lazarus appear in the gate, to testify of the love of Charles and Mary Greenwood, and of their godly fifter.

I thought myself a little better last Sunday; but I have since spit more blood than I had done for weeks before. Glory be to God, for every providence! His will be done in me, by health or sickness, by life or death! All from him is, and, I trust, will always be welcome to your obliged pensioner, I. F.

To Mr. and Mrs. GREENWOOD.

1777-

TEN thousand blessings light upon the heads and hearts of my dear benefactors, Charles and Mary Greenwood! May their quiet retreat

at Newington become a Bethel to them! May their offspring be born again there! And may the choicest consolations of the Spirit visit their minds, whenever they retire thither from the busy city! Their poor pensioner travels on. though flowly, towards the grave. His journey to the sea seems to him to have hastened, rather than retarded, his progress to his old mother, Earth. May every providential blast blow him nearer to the heavenly haven of his Saviour's breast; where, he hopes, one day, to meet all his benefactors, and among them, those whom he now addresses. O my dear friends, what shall I render? What to Jefus? What to you? May He, who invites the heavy laden, take upon him all the burdens of kindness you have heaped on your Lazarus! And may angels, when you die, find me in Abraham's bosom, and bring you into mine, that, by all the kindness, which may be shewn in heaven, I may try to requite that you have shewn to your obliged brother,

To Mrs. THORNTON.

My very dear Friend, Briflington, 1777. I Shall not attempt to express my gratitude to I you, for all your charitable care of a poor fickly worm. As we fay, that filence speaks often the best praises of our great Benefactor, so I must fay here. I hope these lines will find you leaving the things that are behind, and pressing forward toward the mark,—the prize of our high calling on earth. In heaven we are called to be filled with all we can hold of the glorious fulness of God; and what that is, we know not, but we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord. But here also, we are called to be filled with all the fulness of God. God is love, you know; to be filled with all his fulness is then, to be filled with love. O may that love be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us, and abiding in us! I still look for that inessable sulness; and I beg, if you have not yet attained it, you would let nothing damp your hope, and slack

your purfuit.

I spend more time in giving my friends an account of my health, than the matter is worth. You will see by the enclosed, which I beg you would send to the post, when you have shewed it to Mr. John and Charles Wesley, if they think it worth their while to run it over, to see how

their poor fervant does.

I am going to do by my poor fifter, what you have done by me-I mean, try to fmooth the road of fickness to the chamber of death. Gratitude and blood, call me to it, -you have done it without fuch calls; your brotherly kindness is freer than mine; but not so free as the love of Jesus. who took upon him our nature, that he might bear our infirmities, die our death, and make over to us his refurrection and his life, after all we had done to render life hateful and death horrible to him. O! for this matchless love, let rocks and hills, let hearts and tongues, break an ungrateful filence; and let your Christian muse find new anthems, and your poetic heart new flights of eloquence and thankfulness. You partly owe me, by promise, a piece of poetry, on joy in redeeming and fanctifying love. May the spirit of praise assist you mightily in the noble work? Maintain the frame of poetic, Christian joy, by using all' your talents of grace and nature, to embrace, and shew forth his goodness.

I shall be glad to hear from you in Switzerland, and shall doubly rejcice, if you can send me word, that she, who is joined to the Lord according to the glory of the new covenant, is one spirit with him, and enjoys all the glorious liberty of the children of God! The God of peace be with you all! I am, my dear Friend, &c. J. F.

To Mrs. THORNTON.

My dear Friend, Brislington, 1777.

YOU should have heard from me, if some times want of spirits to hold a pen, and for some days, want of paper, had not stood in the way of my inclination. Now I have paper, and a degree of strength, how can I employ both better, than in trying to fulfil with my pen the great commandment, which contains my duty to God, and my neighbour? But what can a pen do here? It can just testify what my heart feels,—That no words can describe, what I owe to my heavenly Benefactor, to my earthly friends, and to you in particular, who have had so much patience as to stand by me, and bear a share in my burdens, for

so many months at home and abroad.

What shall I say? Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gifts, for Jesus, for the Spirit of Jesus,—for the members of Jesus's mystical body; and in particular am I bound to return thanks for those, who have ministered, and still do minister to my wants, and share in my infirmities. meek humility forbids my faying, that among the many who, for Christ's sake, have debased themfelves fo far, as to take up my cross with me, and help me to bear it after my Lord, you stand in the first rank, and the first fruits of my gratitude are due to you. Simon of Cyrene bore our Lord's cross by compulsion: You have borne that of the most unworthy of his fervants without compulfion: And now, what shall I render?—A filent tear whispers, I can render nothing. May the merciful, faithful God, who has promifed, that a cup of cold water given to the least of his followers shall not lose its reward, - may that omnipotent God, who fees you in all the flates of weakness, which await you between the present moment and the hour of death, give you all, that can make your life comfortable, your trials tolerable, your death triumphant, and your eternity

glorious!

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What I ask for you, I also peculiarly beg for your dear brother and sister, who have vouchfased to bind so dry, so insignificant (I had almost said, so rotten) a stick as myself, in the bundle of that love, with which they embrace the poor, the lame, the helpless, the loathsome, and those, who have their fores without, as Lazarus, or within, as I. May we all be found bound up together in the bundle of life, light, and love, with our Lord! And when he shall make up his jewels, may you all shine among his diamonds of the finest water and the first magnitude!

You want possibly to know, how I go on. Tho' I am not worth a line, I shall observe to the glory of my patient, merciful Preserver and Redeemer, that I am kept in sweet peace, and am looking for the triumphant joy of my Lord, and for the sulness express in these words, which sweetly filled the sleepless hours of last night,—

"Drawn,—and redeem'd,—and seal'd,
I bless the One and Three;
With Father, Son, and Spirit fill'd
To all eternity!"

With respect to my body, I sleep less, and spit more blood than I did, when you were here, nor can I bear the least trot of an easy horse. If this continues many days, instead of thinking to go and see my friends on the Continent, I shall turn my steps to my earthly hope, to be ready to lay my bones in my church yard: and in such a case, I shall put you in mind of your kind promise, that you would do to the last the office of a guardian angel—hold up my hands in my last consist, and close my eyes when it is over. Two of my parishioners, came to convey me safe home, and had

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persuaded me to go with them in a post-chaise; but I had so bad a night before the day I was to set

out, that I gave it up.

My prospects and ways are shut up, so that I have nothing to look at but Jesus and the grave. May I so look at them, as to live in my resurrection and my life; and die in all the meekness and holiness of my Lord and my all! I humbly request a continued interest in your fervent prayers, that I may be sound compleatly ready, when my Lord's messenger shall come for my soul. Adieu my dear friend. God bless and reward you. I am, your most affectionate friend and brother,

J. F.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Madeley, Oct. 21, 1777.

Honoured and dear Madam.

THE honour of your Christian letter humbles me, and the idea of your taking half a dozen steps, much more that of your taking a journey to confult fo mean a creature, lays me in the dust. My brothers and fisters invite me to breathe once more my natal air, and the physicians recommend to me a journey to the continent. for the last intimations of providence to determine me to go. If I do, I shall, probably, pass thro' London, and in that case, I could have the honour of waiting upon you. I fay, probably, because I shall only follow my friend, and a serious family, which goes to spend the winter in the South of France, or in Spain: and I do not yet know, whether they defign to embark at Dover, or at some port in the West of England. They have all taken a journey, and at their return, I shall know their determination, and be able to fix the time, when I might have it in my power to wait upon you, Madam, either at your house, or at

our dear Friend's in St. James's Place.

With respect to the hints you drop in your letter, concerning your external circumstances, I find it upon my heart, to fay, Abide in the state, in which you have been called, till Providence makes a way for you to escape out of what may be contrary to your new taste. Your cross has changed its nature with your heart; and we may, in some cases, be called to take up a worldly, as well as a heavenly cross. Joseph and Moses did so once in Egypt, Esther in Susa, Daniel in Babylon, John the Baptist at Herod's court, and our Lord in the house of the rich Pharisee. Some great end, to yourfelf, or to others, may be answered by patiently bearing your worldly crofs, till it be taken from you, or you are removed from under it. Continue to make it matter of earnest prayer to know the will of God concerning you; and whilst your eve watches the motions of the providential cloud, and your heart listens for the Lord's call. endeavour to keep your will as an even balance at his feet, that the least grain of intimation, -clear intimation from him, and the least distinct touch of the hand of Providence, may turn the scale either way, without refistance on your part. Being thus fully perfuaded, you will do, and fuffer all, with the liberty and courage of faith.

You have been afflicted, as well as dear Mrs. G.—, Mrs. L.—, and myself. May our maladies yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness,—complete deadness to the world, and increased faith in the mercy, love, and power of Him, who supports under the greatest trials, and can make our extremity of weakness, an opportunity of displaying the freeness of his grace, and the greatness of his power. Give my duty and thanks to them, and tell them, that I salute them under the cross with the sympathy of a companion

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in tribulation; and rejoice at the thought of doing it, whether the cross shall be exchanged for the crown. In the mean time, let us glory in the cross of our common Head; and firmly believe, that he is exalted to give us whatever is best for

us, in life, in death, and for ever,

I have taken the bark for fome days, and it feems to have been bleffed to the removal of my fpitting blood. Time will decide, whether it be a real removal, or only a suspension of that symptom. Either will prove a bleffing, as his will is To live fingly to God; the best meour health. thod is to defire it in meekness; to spread the defire in quietness before him who inspireth it; to offer him now all we have and are, as we can; and to open our mouth of expectation wide, that he may either fill it with good things, with all his fulnefs, or that he may try our patience, and teach us to know our total helplessness. With respect to the weeping frame of repentance, and the joyous one of faith, they are both good alternately; but the latter is the better of the two, because it enables us to do. and fuffer, and praise, which honours Christ more: both are happily mixed. May they be so in you. Madam, and in your unworthy, and obliged fer vant, 1. F.

To the Rev. Mest. John and Charles Wesley.

Macon, in Burgundy, May 17, 1778.

Rev. and dear Sirs.

Hope that while I lie by, like a broken veffel, the Lord continues to renew your vigour, and fends you to water his vineyard, and to stand in the gap against error and vice. I have recovered some strength, blessed be God, since I came to the Continent; but have lately had another attack of my old complaints. However, I find myself better again, though I think it yet adviseable not to speak in public.

I preached

I preached twice at Marseilles, but was not permitted to follow the blow. There are a few noble, inquisitive Bereans in these parts. The ministers in the town of my nativity have been very civil. They have offered me the pulpit; but I fear, it I could accept the offer, it would soon be recalled. I am loath to quit this part of the field without casting a stone at that giant, Sin, who stalks about with uncommon boldness. I shall, therefore, stay some months longer, to see if the Lord will please to give me a little more strength to

venture an attack.

Gaming and drefs, finful pleasure and love of money, unbelief and false philosophy, lightness of spirit, fear of man, and love of the world, are the principal fins, by which fatan binds his captives in these parts. Materialism is not rare; Deifm and Socinianism are very common; and a fet of Free-thinkers, great admirers of Voltaire and Rosseau, Bayle and Mirabeau, seem bent upon destroying Christianity and government, one hand, (said a lawyer, who has written something against them) they shake the throne, and with the other, they throw down the altars." If we believe them, the world is the dupe of kings and priefts. Religion is fanaticism and superstition. Subordination is flavery and tyranny. Chriftian morality is abfurd, unnatural, and impracticable; and Christianity the most bloody religion that ever was. And here it is certain, that by the example of Christians so called, and by our continual disputes, they have a great advantage, and do the truth immense mischief. Popery will certainly fall in France, this, or he next century; and I make no doubt, God will use those vain men, to bring about a reformation here, as he used Henry the Eighth to do that work in England: fo the madness of his enemies shall, at last, turn to his praise, and to the furtherance of his kingdom.

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In the mean time, it becomes all lovers of the truth, to make their heavenly tempers, and humble, peaceful love to shine before all men, that those mighty adversaries, seeing the good works of professors, may glorify their Father who is in heaven, and no more blaspheme that worthy name, by which we are all called Christians.

If you ask, What system these men adopt? I answer, that some build on Deism, a morality sounded on self-preservation, self-interest, and self-honour. Others laugh at all morality, except that which being neglected violently disturbs society; and external order is the decent covering of Fata-

lism, while Materialism is their system.

O dear Sirs, let me entreat you, in these dangerous days, to use your wide influence, with unabated zeal, against the scheme of these modern Celfuses, Porphiries, and Julians; by calling all profesfors to think and speak the same things, to love and embrace one another, and to stand firmly embodied to relift those daring men; many of whom are already in England headed by the admirers of Mr. Hume and Mr. Hobbes. But it is needless to say this to those who have made, and continue to make fuch a fland for vital Christianity; fo that I have nothing to do but pray, that the Lord would abundantly support and strengthen you to the last, and make you a continued comfort to his enlightened people, loving reprovers of those who mix light and darkness, and a terror to the perverse; and this is the cordial prayer of, Rev. and dear Sirs, your affectionate fon, and obliged fervant in the gospel,

P. S. I need not tell you, Sirs, that the hour in which Providence shall make my way plain to return to England, to unite with the happy number of those who feel, or seek the power of Christian godliness, will be welcome to me. O favoured Britons!

Britons! Happy would it be for them, if they knew their gospel privileges! My relations in Adam are all very kind to me; but the spiritual relations, whom God has raised me in England, exceed them yet. Thanks be to Christ, and to his blasphemed religion!

To the Rev. Dr. Conyers.

Macon, in Burgundy, May 18, 1778.

Hon. and dear Sir,

Left orders with a friend to fend you a little book, called The Reconciliation; in which I endeavour to bring nearer the children of God, who are divided about their partial views of divine truths. I do not know whether that tract has in any degree, answered its design; but I believe truth can be reconciled with itself, and the candid children of God one with another. O that some abler hand, and more loving heart, would undertake to mend my plan, if it be worth mending, or draw one more agreeable to the word of God! My eyes are upon you, dear Sir, and those who are like minded with you, for this work: Difappoint me not of my hope. Stand forth, and make way for reconciling love, by removing (fo far as lies in you,) what is in the way of brotherly O Sir, the work is worthy of you! and if you faw, with what boldness the false philosophers of the Continent, who are the apostles of the age, attack Christianity, and represent it as one of the worst religions in the world, and fit only to make the professors of it murder one another, or at least to contend among themselves; and how they urge our disputes to make the gospel of Christ the jest of nations, and the abhorrence of all flesh, you would break thro' your natural timidity, and invite all our brethren in the ministry, to do what the herds do on the Swifs mountains, when wolves K 4

attack them; instead of goring one another, they unite, form a close battalion, and face the common enemy on all sides. What a shame would it be, if cows and bulls shewed more prudence, and more regard for union, than Christians and Gospel Ministers!

O dear Sir, take courage! Be bold for the reconciling truth. Be bold for peace. You can do all things, thro' Christ strengthening you; and as Doctor Conyers, you can do many things,—a great many more than you think. What if you go, Sir, in Christ's name, to all the gospel ministers of your acquaintance, exhort them as a father, entreat them as a brother, and bring them, or as many of them as you can together! think you that your labour would be in vain in the Lord? Impossible, Sir! O despair not! Charity hopeth all things, and as Kempis saith, "It trieth all things, and bringeth many things to pass, which would appear impossible to him, who despaireth, hateth, or careth not for the sheep."

If you want a coach, or a friend to accompany you, when you go upon this errand of love, remember there is a Thornton in London, and an Ireland in Bristol, who will wish you God speed, and make your way plain before you; and God will raife many more to concur in the peaceful Let me humbly intreat you to go to work, and to persevere in it. I wish I had strength to be at least your position when you go. I would drive, if not like Jehu, at least with some degree of cheerful swiftness, while Christ smiled on the Christian attempt. But I am confident you can do all in the absence, and without the concurrence of him who is, with brotherly love, and dutiful respect, Hon. and dear Sir, your obedient servant in the gospel,

J. F.

To Mr. WILLIAM PERRONET.

My dear Friend, Nyon, June 2, 1778.

WHEN I wrote to you last, I mentioned two ladies of your family, who have married two brothers, Messrs. Monod. Since that time, they have requested me, to send to your father the enclosed memorial, which I hope will prove of use to your family. As the bad writing and the language may make the understanding of it difficult to you, I send you the substance of it, and of the letter of the Ladies' lawyer, as follows.

While I invite you to make your title clear to a precarious estate on earth, permit me, my dear Sir, to remind you of the heavenly inheritance entailed on believers. The Will, the New Testament by which we can recover it, is proved. The court is just and equitable, the Judge is gracious and loving. To enter into possession of a part of the estate here, and of the whole hereafter, we need only believe, and prove evangelically, that we are believers. Let us, then, fet about it now, with earnestness, with perseverance, and with a full affurance, that, through grace, we shall infallibly carry our cause. Alas! what are estates and crowns, to grace and glory? The Lord grant, that we and all our friends, may chuse the better part, which your brother, my dear friend, fo happily chose. And may we firmly stand to the choice, as he did, to the last. My best respects wait upon your dear father, your fisters, and nieces. God reward your kindness to me upon them all!

I have had a pull back fince I wrote last. After I left Mr. Ireland at Macon, to shorten my journey and enjoy new prospects, I ventured to cross the mountains, which separate France from this country. But on the third day of the journey, I found an unexpected trial; a large hill, whose

K 5 winding

winding roads were so steep, that though we sed the horses with bread and wine, they could scarcely draw the chaise, obliged me to walk in all the steepest places. The climbing lasted several hours, the sun was hot, I perspired violently, and the next day I spit blood again. I have chiefly kept to goat's milk ever since, and hope I shall get over this death also, because I find myself, blessed be God, better again, and my cough is neither frequent nor violent.

This is a delightful country. If you come to fee it, and claim the estate, bring all the papers, and memorials your father can collect, and come to share a pleasant apartment, and one of the finest prospects in the world, in the house where I was born. God bless you, my dear friend! Believe me, dear Sir, &c.

J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Nyon, July 15, 1778. Have ventured to preach once, and to expound A once in the church. Our ministers are very kind and preach to the purpose: A young one of this town gave us lately a very excellent, gospel fermon. Grown up people stand fast in their stupidity, or in their felf-righteousness. The day I preached, I met with some children in my wood walking or gathering strawberries. I spoke to them about our Father, our Common Father .-We felt a touch of brotherly affection. They faid they would fing to their Father, as well as the birds; and followed me attempting to make fuch melody as you know is commonly made in these parts. I outrode them, but some of them had the patience to follow me home, and faid they would speak with me; but the people of the house stopt them, faying I would not be troubl d with children. They cried, and faid, "They were

were fure I would not fay fo, for I was their good brother." The next day when I heard it, I enquired after them, and invited them to come to me; which they have done every day fince. I make them little hymns which they fing. Some of them are under fweet drawings. Yesterday, I wept for joy, on hearing one speak of conviction of fin, and joy unspeakable in Christ which had followed, as would do an experienced believer in Last Sunday I met them in the wood: There were one hundred of them, and as many adults. Our first Pastor has since desired me to defift from preaching in the wood, (for I had exhorted) for fear of giving umbrage; and I have complied from a concurrence of circumstances which are not worth mentioning: I therefore meet them in my Father's yard.

In one of my letters, I promifed you fome anecdotes, concerning the death of our two great philosophers, Voltaire and Rosseau. Mr. Tronchin, the Physician of the Duke of Orleans, being sent for to attend Voltaire in his illness at Paris, Voltaire said to him, "Sir, I desire you would save my life. I will give you the half of my fortune, if you lengthen out my days only for six months. If not, I shall go to the devil, and shall carry you away along with me."

Mr. Rosseau, died more decently, as full of himself as Voltaire was of the wicked one. He paid that attention to nature, and the natural sun, which the Christian pays to grace, and the Sun of Righteousness. These are some of his last words to his wife, which I copy from a printed letter circulating in these parts. "Open the window, that I may see the green fields once more. How beautiful is nature! How wonderful is the sun! See that glorious light it sends forth! It is God, who calls me.—How pleasing is death, to a man who is not conscious of any sin! O God, my soul

is now as pure as when it first came out of thy hands: crown it with thy heavenly bliss!"—God deliver us from felf and fatan, the internal and external fiend! The Lord forbid we should fall into the snare of the Sadducees, with the former of those two famous men, or into that of the Pharisees with the latter. Farewell in Jesus,

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

Nyon, Sept. 15, 1778. My dear Friend, Am just returned from an excursion I made I with my brother, through the fine vale in the midst of the high hills, which divide France from this country. In that vale we found three lakes, one on French ground, and two on Swifs; the largest is fix miles long and two wide. part of the country where industry is most apparent, and where population thrives best. The inhabitants are chiefly woodmen, coopers, watchmakers, and jewellers. They told me, they had the best singing, and the best preacher in the country. I asked, If any finners were converted under his ministry? They stared, and asked, "What I meant by conversion?" When I had explained myself, they said, "We did not live in the time of miracles."

I was better fatisfied in passing thro' a part of the vale which belongs to the King of France. I saw a prodigious concourse of people, and supposed they kept a fair, but was agreeably surprized to find it was three Missionaries, who went about as itinerant preachers to help the regular clergy. They had been there already some days, and were three brothers who preached morning and evening. The evening service opened by what they called a conference. One of the Missionaries took the pulpit, and the parish Priest proposed questions to him, which he answered at full length, and in a

very edifying manner. The fubject was the unlawfulness and the mischief of those methods, by which persons of different sexes lay snares for each other, and corrupt each others morals. The subject was treated with delicacy, propriety and truth. The method was admirably well calculated to draw and fix the attention of a mixed multitude. This conference being ended, another Missionary took the pulpit. His text was our Lord's description of the Day of Judgment. Before the fermon, all those who for the press could kneel, did, and fung a French hymn, to beg a bleffing upon the word; and indeed it was bleffed. An awful attention was visible upon most, and for a good part of the discourse, the voice of the preacher was almost lost in the cries and bitter wailings of the audience. When the outcry began, the preacher was describing the departure of the wicked into eternal fire. They urged that God was mereiful and that Jesus Christ had shed his blood for them. "But that mercy you have flighted (re-plies the Judge) and now is the time of Justice; that blood you have trodden under foot, and now it cries for vengeance. Know your day-flight the Father's mercy and the Son's blood no longer." I have feen but once or twice congregations as much affected in England.

One of our Ministers being ill, I ventured a second time into the pulpit last Sunday; and the Sunday before, I preached six miles off to 2000 people in a jail yard, where they were come to see a poor murderer two days before his execution. I was a little abused by the Bailist on the occasion, and refused the liberty of attending the poor man to the scassfold where he was to be broken on the wheel. I hope he died penitent. The day before he suffered, he said he had broken his irons, and, that as he deserved to die, he desired new ones to be put on, lest he should be tempted

to make his escape a second time.

You ask, What I design to do? I propose, if it be the Lord's will, to spend the winter here, to bear my testimony against the trade of my countrymen, which Voltaire describes thus—

Barbares, dont la guerre est l'uniquemetier, Et qui vendent leur sang é qui vent leaier.

In the Spring, I shall, if nothing prevents, return to. England with you, or with Mr. Perronet, if his affairs are settled, or alone if other ways fail. In the mean while, I rejoice with you in Jesus, and in the glorious hope of that complete salvation his faithfulness has promised, and his power can never be at a loss to bestow. We must be saved by faith and hope, till we are saved by perfect love, and made partakers of heavenly glory.

I am truly a firanger here. Well then, as ftrangers let us go where we shall meet the affembly of the righteous gathered in Jesus. Farewell in him, you and yours.

J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Nyon, Feb, 2, 1779.

Am forry to hear that you are still tried by illness; but our good heavenly Father, will have us to live with one foot on earth, and the other in the stirrup of our insirmities, ready to mount and pass from time into eternity. He is wise; his will be done, his name praised, and our souls saved, tho' it be by the skin of our teeth!

I am better, thank God, and ride out every day when the slippery roads will permit me to venture without the risk of breaking my horses legs and my own neck. You will ask me, How I have spent my time? I pray, have patience, rejoice, and write when I can; I saw wood in the house

house when I cannot go out, and eat grapes, of which I have always a basket by me. Our little Lord Lieutenant has forbidden the ministers to let me exhort in the parsonage, because it is the Sovereign's house. My second brother has addressed a memorial to him, in which he informs him, that he will give up neither his religious nor civil liberty, and will open his house for the word of God; and accordingly we have fince met at his house. On Sunday we met at the young Clergyman's, who, in his part, writes against the conduct of the Clergy: But I fear we fence against a wall of brass. However I am quite persuaded that Providence calls me to leave a testimony to my French brethren, and it may be of some use when I shall be no more. I have been comforted by feeing the Apology of a Minister at Yverdon, who was perfecuted in the beginning of this century under the name of Pietest. I have got acquainted with a faithful Minister of Geneva, but he dares no more offer me his pulpit, than my brother-in-law at Loufanne.

The Lord was not in the forwardness of the young man I mentioned. It was but a fire of straw; and he has now avoided me for some weeks. Several young women seem to have received the word in the love of it, and sour or five grown up ones; but not one man except the young hopeful Clergyman I mention, who helps me at my little meetings and begins to preach extempore. I hope he will stand his ground better than he, who was such an approver when you were here, and is now dying after having drawn back to the world.

The truths I chiefly insist upon, when I talk to the people who will hear me, are those which I feed upon myself as my daily bread—" God our "Maker and Preserver, tho' invisible, is here and "every where. He is our chief good, because "all beauty and all goodness center in, and

" flow

flow from him. He is especially Love, and love in us, being his image, is the sum and sub-

" stance of all moral and spiritual excellence—of

" all true and lasting bliss. In Adam we are all

" estranged from love and from God; but the fecond Adam, Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.

" is come to make us know and enjoy again our

"God as the God of love and the chief good.

"All who receive Jesus, receive power to become

" the fons of God, &c. &c."

I hope I shall be able to set out for England with Mr. Perronet in April or May. O that I may find that dear island in peace within and without! Well, I hope you make peace in the Church if you cannot make peace with the Patriots.-God is a good God: do you know the coats and shoes you gave me have lasted all this while, and are yet good; fo that I need not draw upon your banker. Thank God and you for a thousand favours! God bless and comfort you, my dear friend. We are poor creatures, but we have a good God to cast all our burdens upon, and who often burdens us, that we may have our conftant and free recourse to his bounty, power, and faithfulnefs. Stand fast in the faith. Believe lovingly, and all will be well. Farewell. I. F.

To Mr. CHARLES GREENWOOD.

My dear Friend, Nyon, May 22, 1778.

If Am yet alive, able to ride out, and now and then to instruct a few children. I hope Mr. Perronet will soon have settled his affairs, and then, please God, I shall inform you by word of mouth, how much I am indebted to you, Mrs. Greenwood, and Mrs. Thornton. I know it so much the more now, as I have made trial of the kindness of my relations in Adam; those in Christ exceed them as far in my account, as grace does nature. Thank and salute them earnestly from

me, and to those of your own household, please to add Mr. John and Charles Wesley, Dr. Coke, Mr. A—, &c. That the Lord would fill you all with his choicest blessings, as you have done me, is, my dear Friend, the earnest prayer of your poor pensioner,

J. F.

P. S. Mr. Perronet wants me to fill up his letter. I would gladly do it, with thanks to God for his unspeakable gifts-his Son, his Spirit, and his word! And thanks be to his people, for their kindness towards the poor, the fick, the stranger, and especially towards me! But at this time, a fleepless night, and a constant tooth-ache, unfit me for almost every thing, but lying down under the cross, kissing the rod, and rejoicing in hope of a better state, in this world or in the next. But, perhaps, weakness and pain are the best for me in this world. Well, the Lord will chuse for me, and I fully fet my heart and feal to his choice. Let us not faint in the day of advertity. The Lord tries us, that our faith may be found purged of all the drofs of felf-will, and may work by that love, which beareth all things, and thinketh evil of nothing. Our calling is to follow the Crucified, and we must be crucified with him, until body and foul know the power of his refurrection, and pain and death are done away.

I hope my dear friend will make, with me, a constant choice of the following mottos of St. Paul,—" Christ is gain in life and death,—Our life is hid with Christ in God,—If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him,—We glory in tribulation,—God will give us rest with Christ, in that day,—We are saved by hope." And that Miss Thornton will always, by word and deed stand to her mosto, and rejoice in the Lord our God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanstifier. To him laters are always in the Constant of Sanstifier.

him let us give glory in the fires. Amen.

To a NOBLEMAN.

Nyon, Dec. 15, 1779. My Lord, I F the American Colonies, and the West India I Islands are rent from the crown, there will not grow one ear of corn the less in Great Britain, We shall still have the necessaries of life, and, what is more, the gospel, and liberty to hear it. If the great springs of trade and wealth are cut off, good men will bear that loss without much forrow; for fprings of wealth are always fprings of luxury, which, fooner or later, destroy the empires corrupted by wealth. Moral good may come out of our losses; I wish you may fee it in England. People on the Continent imagine they fee it already in the English on their travels, who are faid to behave with more wisdom, and less haughtinefs, than they were used to do.

Last year faw the death of three great men of these parts—Rosseau, Voltaire, and Baron Haller, a senator of Berne. The last, who is not much known, I think, in England, was a great philosopher, a prosound politician, and an agreeable poet: But he was particularly samous for his skill in botany, anatomy, and physic. He has enriched the republic of letters by such a number of publications in Latin and German, that the catalogue

of them alone is a pamphlet.

This truly great man has given another proof of the truth of Lord Bacon's affertion, that, "altho' smatterers in philosophy are often impious, true philosophers are always religious." I have met with an old, pious, apostolic Clergyman, who was intimate with the Baron, and used to accompany him over the Alps, in his rambles after the wonders of nature. "With what pleasure, said the minister, did we admire and adore the wisdom of the God of nature, and fanctify our researches by the sweet praises of the God of grace!"

When the Emperor passed this way, he stabled Voltaire to the heart, by not paying him a visit; but he waited on Haller, was two hours with him, and heard from him such pious talk, as he never heard from half the philosophers of the age. The Baron was then ill of the disorder, which afterwards carried him off.

Upon his death bed, he went thro' fore conflicts about his interest in Christ; and fent to the old minister, requesting his most fervent prayers, and wishing him to find the way thro' the dark valley fmoother than he found it himself. However, in his last moments, he expressed a renewed confidence in God's mercy, thro' Christ, and died in peace. The old clergyman added, that he thought the Baron went thro' this conflict, to humble him thoroughly, and, perhaps, to chastise him for having fometimes given way to a degree of felf-complacence, at the thought of his amazing parts, and of the respect they procured him from the learned world. He was obliged to become last in his own eyes, that he might become first, and truly great in the fight of the Lord. I am, My Lord, &c.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Madeley, Sept. 31, 1781.

My much honoured Lady,

of above a month; and yesterday I received the honour of your letter without date, which has been, I am told, waiting here some time. What a pity I did not rejoice sooner in the good news you send me, that you defire to be entirely devoted to God. Indeed, complaints sollow; but beaven is in that holy desire. If you cultivate it, it will produce all that conformity to a holy God, which love can bring to a human soul, called to partake

partake the divine nature. As for your complaints, they are the natural expressions of that repentance, which precedes, in our hearts, the coming of the Comforter, who is to abide with us for ever. I am ready to rejoice, or to mourn with my honoured friend; and I have abundant cause to do both, with respect to myself, my ministrations, the

Church, and my people.

And will you, indeed, find it in your heart to honour my house with your presence, and perfume also with your prayers the plain apartments occupied by your friend Johnson? I wonder at nothing on earth, when I confider the condescenfion with which Emmanuel came down from heaven, and filled a stable with his glory. Your time, my condescending friend, will suit me best. You will be queen in my hermitage, the Lord will rule in our hearts, and you will command under him within our walls. You smile, perhaps, at the vastness of your new empire; but if you can be content and happy in God in my homely folitude, you will make greater advances towards blifs, than if you obtained the principality of Wales. But if you cannot be happy with Jesus, prayer, praife, godly conversation, and retirement, expect a disappointment. However, my honoured friend, if you come, as the ferious Catholics go on a pilgrimage, as French noblemen go to the Carthusian convent at La Trappe, as the French king's aunts went to the Carmelites: come and do evangelical pennance. Our good friend Johnson, will tell you of an upper room, where we crucify our old man, and have had many a vifit from the new. If you do not bring her with you, bring her faith, which brought him down, and then you shall not pine for the company of earthly princes. The Prince of Peace and Life, himself will keep his court in our cottage, and your heart shall be one of his favourite thrones.

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I hope, my Lady, you will bring us good news of our friends in St. James's Place. My heart visits them often, and if bodies could move as quick as thought, they would be importuned frequently with my company. If you write to them, before I do, convey my Christian and grateful love in your letter, and accept it yourself from, my honoured and dear Lady, your dutiful servant in Christ,

J. F.

To Miss PERRONET.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Sept. 4, 1781. YOU want "fome thoughts on the Love of God," and I want the warmest feelings of it. Let us believe his creating, feel his preserving, admire his redeeming, and triumph in his fanctifying love. Loving is the best way to grow in love. Look we, then, at the love of our heavenly Father, shining in the face of our elder Brother, and we shall be changed into love, his image and nature, from one glorious, and glorifying degree of love to another. Love always delights in the object loved. "Delight thou in the Lord, then, and thou shalt have thy heart's defire;" for we can defire nothing more than the fupreme good, and infinite blifs: both are in God. When, therefore, we love God truly, we delight in what he is, we share in his infinite happiness; and by divine fympathy, his throne of glory becomes ours; for true love rejoices in all the joy of the object it cleaves to. Add to this, that when we love God, we have always our hearts defire; for we love his will, his defires become ours, and ours are always perfectly refigned to his. Now as God does whatever he pleafes both in heaven and earth, his lovers have always their hearts defire, forafmuch as they always have his will, which is theirs. Submitting our private will to his, is only preferring a greater good to a lefs, as our Lord did in the garden;

garden: and we are all called to do it in afflictions. Farewell, my dear friend, and excuse these reflections, which you could make much better than your humble fervant,

J. F.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Madeley, Sept. 29, 1781. My dear and honoured Friend,

YOU have been in the fire of affliction, where faith is tried, where patient hope is exercised, and where perfect love, which casts out fear, and endureth all things, is proved worthy of him, who made bare his breast, and said to his Father, "Lo! I come to do thy will, O God!" I come to be obedient unto death, even the painful,

shameful death of the cross.

Continue to offer your body as a living, or if it please God, as a lingering, dying sacrifice to him, who has decreed, that if we will reign with Christ, we must suffer with him. This is our reasonable service; for it would be absurd, that our Lord should have been persected by sufferings, thorns, and the cross, and that we should have nothing but enjoyment, roses, and a crown. How faithful, how merciful is our God! He brings you once more from the verge of eternity: well, my dear friend, I welcome you back into life, and into the enjoyment of farther opportunities of receiving and doing good,—of growing in grace, and persecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.

Chastened, spared like you, and more and more convinced, that I am helplessness itself, and that there is help laid on our Surety and Saviour for us, I invite you to say with me—When I am weak, Christ my life is strong still: "For me to live shall be Christ, and to die gain." Dear Madam, to know the bare cross is uncomfortable; but to know, and gather the fruit of that tree, is life

from

from the dead, it is more abundant life after fainting. Let us then know, i. e. confider, and embrace Jesus Christ crucified to make an end of sin;—shedding tears, and his most precious blood, to cleanse us from all sin; to trace again the divine image, goodness, love, and happiness on our souls,

and to feal our firm title to glory.

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"Not a text," fay you, "came to me, only I knew none perished at his feet:" then, you remembered Christ, the fum and substance of all the scriptures; then you believed on him, in whom all the sweetest texts, and all the promises are yea, and amen. O believe more fleadily, more confidently. Dare even to obey the apostolic precept, " Reckon yourselves dead indeed, unto sin, but alive to God by Jesus Christ our Lord." Embrace with more earnestness, the righteousness of faith, and you will have more peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rejoice in Christ, your peace; yea, rejoice in God, your Saviour; and if there is a needs be, for your being in heaviness for a season, rejoice in tribulation: sorrowful, but always rejoicing. "When I am destitute of all comfort," this shall yield me comfort, saith Kempis, "that thy will is done." If Abraham believed in hope against hope, that is against human, natural hope; can you not, thro' grace, as a daughter of Abraham, rejoice in heavenly hope against all natural feelings, and even against all temptations? "Count it all joy," fays St. James, "when you fall into divers temptations and trials." Don't be afraid of the storm: Christ is in the ship, and he does not fleep, as unbelief is apt to fancy.

I thank you, my dear Lady, for your friendly with of leaving your clay here. I return it, by withing you may leave all the body of fin, now, in that mysterious grotto of Mount Calvary, where myriads of finners have buried their doubts, their fears, and their old man. Prop up your clay a

little

tion to God and the Lamb. I want you to help me, with the understanding and the voice, to witness, that Jesus faves to the uttermost all, who come to God through him; that he can, not only make an end of sin, but bring in an everlasting, triumphant righ-

teou/ne/s.

I am not without hope of seeing you in London, before you see your future hermitage. All my brotherly love goes to Town, and salutes you and your good nurses, Mrs. C—, Mrs. ——, Mrs. ——, to whose continued care, as well as to that of our dear Redeemer, I earnestly recommend you. I am, my dear Lady, your obedient, affectionate servant, J. F.

To the Hon. Mrs. C____,

Cross Hall, Yorkshire, Dec. 26, 1781.

My very dear Friend,

YOUR favour of the 4th instant did not reach me until a considerable time after date, thro' my being still absent from Madeley; a clergyman of this neighbourhood having made an exchange with me, to facilitate my fettling some affairs of a temporal nature in this country. The kind part you take in my happiness demands my warmest thanks; and I beg you will accept them multiplied by those, which my dear Partner presents to you. Yes, my dear Friend, I am married in my old age, and have a new opportunity of confidering a great mystery in the most perfect type of our Lord's mystical union with his church. I have now a new call to pray for a fulness of Christ's holy, gentle, meek, loving Spirit, that I may love my wife, as he loved his spouse, the Church. But the emblem is greatly deficient: The Lamb is worthy of his spouse, and more than worthy, whereas I must acknowledge myself unworthy of

the yoke-fellow, whom heaven has referred for me. She is a person after my own heart; and I make no doubt we shall increase the number of the happy marriages in the Church Militant. Indeed they are not fo many, but it may be worth a Chriftian's while to add one more to the number. God declared it was not good, that man, a focial being, should live alone, and therefore he gave him a help meet for him: for the same reason our Lord fent forth his disciples two and two. Had I searched the three kingdoms, I could not have found one brother willing to share gratis my weal, woe and labours, and complaifant enough to unite his fortune to mine; but God has found me a partner, a sister, a wife, to use St. Paul's language, who is not afraid to face with me the colliers and bargemen of my parish, until death part us.

Buried together in our country village, we shall help one another to trim our lamps, and wait, as I trust you do continually, for the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom. Well; for us the heavenly Child is born, to us a double Son is given, and with him the double kingdom of grace and glory; O my dear friends, let us press into, and meet in both of these kingdoms. Our Surety and Saviour is the way and the door into them; and blessed be free grace, the way is free, as the King's highway, and the door open, like the arms of

Jesus crucified.

January 1st, 1782. I live, blessed be God, to devote myself again to his blessed service, in this world, or in the next, and to wish my dear friends all the blessings of a Year of Jubilee. Whatever this year bring forth, may it bring us the fullest measures of salvation attainable on earth, and the most complete preparation for heaven. I have a solemn call to gird my loins and keep my lamp burning. Strangely restored to health and strength, consider-

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ing my years; by the good nurling of my dear Partner, I ventured to preach of late as often as I did formerly, and after having read prayers and preached twice on Christmas day, &c. I did, last Sunday what I had never done-I continued doing duty from 10 till past 4 in the afternoon, owing to christenings, churchings, and the facrament which I administered to a church full of people; fo that I was obliged to go from the communiontable to begin the evening fervice, and then to visit fome fick. This has brought back upon me one of my old, dangerous symptoms; so that I had flattered myself in vain, to do the whole duty of my own parish. My dear wife is nursing me with the tenderest care, gives me up to God with the greatest resignation, and helps me to rejoice, that life and death, health and fickness, work all for our good, and are all ours, as bleffed inftruments to forward us in our journey to heaven. We intend to fet out for Madeley to morrow. The prospect of a winter's journey is not sweet; but the prospect of meeting you and your dear fifter, and Lady Mary, and Mrs. L and Mrs. G-, and all our other companions in tribulation in heaven, is delightful. The Lord prepare and fit us for that glorious meeting! As foon as I reach Madeley, I shall write to Lady Mary. Give my best respects to her, to our dear sister, and to the Ladies I have just named; and believe me to be, my dear Friend and Fellow traveller to Zion, your most obliged and affectionate Servant,

P. S. If Lady Huntingdon is in London, I would beg you to prefent my duty to her, with my best wishes.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Madeley, Jan. 1782.

Thank you, my Lady, for your kind congratulations on my marriage. The Lord has indeed bleffed me with a Partner after my own heart—dead to the world, and wanting, as well as myfelf, to be filled with all the life of God. She joins me in dutiful thanks to your Ladyship, for your obliging remembrance of her in your kind letter, and will help me to welcome you to the little hermitage we spoke of last year in London, if your Ladyship's health or taste, should call you to retire for a while from the hurry of the Town.

What a difference between the court of the King of kings, and that of King George! How peaceable the former, how full of hurry the latter! The Prince himself welcomes us, and manifests himself to us, as Prince of Peace, as Emmanuel, God with us. He will even bring his kingdom, and keep his court in our hearts. If we open them, by the attention and recollection of faith, he will even sup with us, and make us taste the fweetness of that bread, which came down from heaven, and the virtue of that blood, which cleanfes from all fin. That this may be our constant experience, and that of our dear companions in tribulation in St. James's place, is the fincere and frequent wish of, my Lady, your most obliged and obedient fervant, I. F.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

My honoured Friend,

Madeley, Aug. 28, 1782.

RACE, Mercy, and humble Love be multiplied to you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, thro' the eternal L 2 Spirit:

Spirit; in whose name we were baptized into the body of the Church, the Spoule of the Son of God. The Lord has peculiar favours in store for your Ladyship, and for me: the proof is, that we are afflicted. Have you been in a weak state of health? I have had the honour to drink of your cup: the influenza has laid me down, but the Lord has raifed me up again; and when I was partly well. I broke my thin accidentally (should I not fay providentially) against a bench, and the confequence was my being confined by a bad leg to my bed, whence I write these lines. O may they be lines of confolation to my dear friend! May the God of all Grace, who comforts unworthy me, rejoice your oppressed heart, and make it overflow with his patient love, and fanctifying truth.

You still complain of vile felf: I wish you joy. for your knowing your enemy. Let vile felf be reduced to order, and, tho' he be a bad master, he will become an excellent fervant. If you fay, How shall I do this? I reply, by letting the Lord, the Maker, the Preserver, the Redeemer, the Lover of your foul, ascend upon the throne of your thoughts, will and affections. Who deferves to engrofs and fill them better than he does? Is he not your first Lord, your hest Husband, your most faithful Friend, and your greatest Benefactor? If you fay, "I do not fee him;" I reply, that you never faw the foul of any of your Friends; -nor do you see even the body of him you call your Idol. O! allow Jehovah, the Supreme Being, to be to you, what he deferves to be, all in all. One lively act of faith, one affent and confent to this delightful truth, that your Father, who is in heaven, loves you a thousand times more than you love your idol, (for God's love is like himfelf, infinite and boundless,) will fet your heart at liberty, and even make it dance for joy. What, if, to this ravishing consideration, you add the transporting truth, that the Son of God, fairer than the fons of men, and brighter than angels, has loved you unto death-to the death of the cross, and loves you still, more than all your friends do, were their love collected into one heart: could you help thinking, with a degree of joyous gratitude, of fuch an instance of divine condescention? No, your vile self would be enobled, raised, expanded, and set at liberty, by this evangelical thought; and if you did not destroy this divine conception, if you nourished this little degree of the love of Christ, Emmanuel, the God of Love, would be more fully manifested in you, and falvation would from this moment grow in your foul. Jefus would grow in your believing, loving heart; felf would be no body, Emmanuel would be all in all; and Lady Mary would share all the happiness, and ere long, all the glory of that favoured Virgin whom all the nations shall call bleffed. You bear her name; let her Son, by the incorruptible feed of the word, be also formed in you thro' faith; and you will be so taken up by this wonder of divine love, so employed in praifing your Father's mercy, and Saviour's love and tenderness, that you will have but little time to speak either of good or bad self. When self is forgotten as nothing before God, you put felf in its proper place; and you make room for the heavenly Being, whose holy and happy existence you are to shadow out.

If you have left off attending on the Princess, attend on the Prince of Peace with double diligence. If you have been wanting in that fweet and honourable duty, it is because the enemy has told you lies of your Saviour, and has cast a veil over the love of his heart, and the beauty of his

face. See the fnare, and avoid it.

Shall we ever have the honour of feeing you, my Lady? My wife, who joins in respectful love and thanks to your Ladyship for your remembrance of her, favs fhe will do her best to render our cold house fase for you, if not convenient. You would have had a repeated invitation from us, if fear, and a concern for your health, heightened by the bad weather, had not checked our defires to have an opportunity of affuring you here, how much we are devoted to your fervice. But the roads and the weather beginning to amend, we venture to offer you the best apartment in our hermitage. I wish it were large enough to take in dear Mrs. G-, and our dear friends in St. James's Place; but we have only two fmall rooms; to which, however, you would be received with two enlarged hearts; I mean those of, my honoured Lady, your Ladyship's obedient, devoted fervants. I. and M. F.

To the Rev. Mr. CHARLES WESLEY.

Rev. and dear Sir, Madeley, Dec. 19, 1782.

I Thank you for your hint about exemplifying the love of Christ and his Church. I hope we do. I was afraid, at first, to say much of the matter: for new married people do not at first, know each other: but having now lived fourteen months in my new state, I can tell you, Providence has reserved a prize for me, and that my wife is far better to me, than the Church to Christ; so that if the parallel fails, it will be on my side.

Be so good as to peruse the enclosed sheets. Mr. De Luc, to whom they are addressed, is Reader to the Queen, and the Author of some volumes of Letters to her: He is a true philosopher. I flatter myself, he will present my letter

to the Queen. Do you find any thing improper in the addition I have made to my Poem? I wish I were near you for your criticisms: you would

direct me, both as a Poet and a Frenchman.

I have yet strength enough to do my parish duty without the help of a Curate. O that the Lord would help me to do it acceptably and profitably! The colliers begun to rise in this neighbourhood: happily the cockatrice's egg was crushed, before the serpent came out. However, I got many a hearty curse from the colliers, for the plain words I spoke on that occasion. I want to see days of power both within and without; but in the mean row path. My wise joins me in respectful love to Mrs. Wesley and yourself, and requesting an interest in your prayers for us, I remain, my dear Sir, your affectionate, obliged brother, servant, and son in the gospel,

To Mrs. THORNTON.

My dear Friend, Madeley, March 3, 1783.

ESTERDAY I received your melancholy, joyful letter, as I came from the facrament, where the grace of God had armed me to meet the awful news. And is my merciful Host gone to reap the fruit of his mercy to me? I thought I should have been permitted to go first and welcome him into everlasting habitations; but Providence has ordered it otherwise, and I am lest behind to say, with you and dear Mrs. Greenwood, "The Lord gave, and has taken away, and blessed be his holy name!"

The glory with which his fetting fun was gilded, is the greatest comfort by which Heaven could alleviate his loss. Let me die as he did, and let my last end be like his! I was so sensibly affected by your account, that I could not help reading

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part of your letter at church in the afternoon, and defiring all the congregation to join me in thanksgiving for the late mercies he had vouchfafed to my generous benefactor. On fuch occasions, let sighs be lost in praise; and repining in humble submission and thankful acquiescence. I hope dear Mrs. Greenwood mixes a tear of joy with a tear of sorrow. Who would not be landed on the other side the stream of time, if he were sure of such a passage? Who would wish his best friend back on the shores of sorrow so triumphantly left by Mr. Greenwood?

I hope Mr. Thomas Greenwood, and his brotheir good purposes by their dying Father's exhortations and charges. Pray give my kindest love to them both, and tell them, I join my entreaties to his, that they would take to and keep in the way, that brought their parent peace and joy at the last.

Lazarus is still alive! What scenes does this world afford? But the most amazing is certainly that of Emmanuel crucified, and offering us pardons and crowns of glory. May we ever gaze at that wonderful object, until it has formed us into love, peace and joy! We thank you for the sweet name you still call us by, and we heartily take the hint and subscribe ourselves your affectionate, grateful friends, and ready servants in Christ, I. and M. F.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Dublin, Aug. 23, 1783.

Honoured and dear Madam,

I See the truth of those words of our Lord, In me ye shall have peace, comfort, strength and joy; Be of good cheer. We came here to see the members of our Lord, and we find you removed,

and removing farther still, than you now are. What does this Providence teach us? I learn, that I must rejoice in the Lord above all his members, and find them all in him, who fills all in all; who is the life of all our friends, the joy of all our brethren. If our Lord is your life, your strength, and your all, you will remove in vain to the North or South; you cannot go from your spiritual friends; they will meet you in the common centre of all life and righteousness; there, they will bless you, rejoice in your joy, and sym-

pathize in your forrow.

If Providence calls you to England by Scotland, by which route your Ladyship apprehends fo much difficulty, you know, we must at least, go to heaven by a way equally painful—the narrow way, the way marked with blood, and with the tears and crofs of the Son of God; and if we follow him weeping, we shall return with everlasting joy on our heads. Even now the foretaste of those joys is given to us thro' hope, for by hope we are faved. Let our faith and hope be in God, rooted and grounded in him, who gives vital heat to our hearts, and who fans there the foark of grace, which his mercy has kindled; and may that spark, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, become a fire of holy love, heavenly zeal, and heavenly glory. Such power belongeth to the Almighty. He that spared not his own Son, and has promifed us his Holy Spirit, which is the mighty stream of his grace, and the mighty slame of his love, will not deny us that power, if we wait for it in his appointed ways; and ask it in the all prevailing name of Emmanuel, God with us.

My dear partner, who, like myself, is deeply fensible of your Ladyship's kindness in remembering us, joins me in thanks for your obliging note,

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and in cordial wishes, that all the desires of your believing soul may be granted you, both for time, death, and eternity. We subscribe ourselves with grateful sincerity, honoured Madam, your devoted servants in our bleeding Lord,

J. and M. F.

To WILLIAM SMYTH, Efq;

Dear Sir, Madeley, Nov .- , 1783. HE many and great favours, you have loaded us with, during our long stay under your hospirable roof, prompted us to make the earliest acknowledgement of our obligations, and to beg you would receive our warmest thanks for such unexpected, and undeferved tokens of your brotherly love. But the defire of filling our only frank has hindered their being more early traced upon paper; tho' they have been, are now, and, we trust, shall ever be deeply engraven on our hearts. You have united for us the Irish hospitality, the English cordiality, and the French politeness. And now, Sir, what shall we say? You are our generous benefactor, and we are your affectionate, tho' unprofitable servants. In one fense, we are on a level with those, to whom you show charity in the streets; we can do nothing but pray for you, your dear Partner, and yours. You kindly received us for Christ's fake; may God receive you freely for his fake alfo! You have borne with our infirmities; -the Lord bear with yours also! You have let your fervant ferve us;—the Lord give all his fervants and his angels charge concerning you, that you hurt not your foot against a stone, and may be helped out of every difficulty! You have given us a most pleasing resting place, and comfortable apartment under your roof, and next your own chamber :- the Lord grant you eternal rest with him in his heavenly mansions? May he

he himself be your habitation and resting place for ever; and place you and yours with his own jewels in the choicest repository of precious things! You have fed us with the richest food :-- May the giver of every perfect gift fit you for a place at his table, and may you rank there with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? You have given us wines: may you drink, with Christ himself, the fruit of the vine, new in your Father's kingdom! You have given us a rich provision for the way :-- when you cross the flood, the deep flood of death, may you find, that your heavenly Lord has made fuch a rich provision of faith, righteousness, hope, and joy for you, that you may rejoice, triumph and fing, while you leave your earthly friends to go home! which, by the bye, is more than we were enabled to do; for instead of finging in our ca-

bins, there was very different melody.

However, we could foon with grateful, joyful hearts, look back from the British to the Irish shore, and greet in spirit the dear friends we had left there. The Lord blefs and increase them in spiritual, and, if best for them, in temporal goods alfo! The Lord crown them and theirs with loving kindness, and mercies equal to the love of our God, and the merits of our Saviour! And now dear Sir, what shall I add? I cannot now even fee my Bible but thro' the medium of your love, and the token with which it alternately loads my pocket and my hand. I cannot even feal a letter with a good wafer, but I find a new call to repeat my thanks to you. I would begin again, but my fcrap of paper is full, as well as my heart; and I must spare a line to tell you, that I had the pleasure of seeing our kind benefactres Mrs. Smyth safe at Bristol, with her little charge and Lady Mary. We beg our thanks to John, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, and all, who were kind to us for Christ's sake and for yours. We remain, dear Sir,

Sir, your most affectionate and most obliged penfioners and servants, J. and M. F.

To the Society in Dublin.

Madeley, Nov. 1783.

To all the dear Brethren, who after kindly inviting John and Mary Fletcher, patiently bearing with them, and their infirmities, and entertaining them in the most hospitable, Christian manner, have added to all their former favours, that of thanking them for their most pleasant and profitable journey.—

Brethren, and dearly beloved in the Lord.

We had felt shame enough under the sense of your kindness and patience towards us, and of our unprofitableness towards you, when at Dublin. You needed not have added to our shame by the new token of your love, the friendly letter we have received from you. We, we are indebted to you, dear brethren, we owed you the letter of thanks, you have gratuitously fent. But in all things you will have the pre-eminence, and we are glad to drink the cup of humility at your feet. May the Lord, who can part a fea by the touch of a rod, and could at first cause the earth to bring forth abundantly all manner of trees and plants without feed, so bless the feed of the word, which we fowed in great weakness among you, as to make it produce a full crop of humble repentance, checrful faith, triumphant hope, and the fanctifying influences of God's Spirit in your hearts, in all your families, in all your affemblies, and in your whole fociety! If your profuse liberality towards us, abounded to the comfort of our poor brethren, we doubly rejoice on your account, and on theirs.

When we see so many of your dear names, we rejoice in hopes, that as they fill and confirm an epistle dictated by overslowing love, so they are

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enroll'd on the lift of the dear people, whom our great High Priest bears, not on the breast-plate as Aaron, but on his bleeding hands, and in his very heart, which is the overflowing and everflowing fountain of divine and brotherly love. We cannot remember your faces; we remember what will last longer than your features, your work and labour, your repasts of love, together with your prayers and fighs. May that feed fown be watered by the Redeemer's blood! We ask it with tears of gratitude and joy, while we, on our bended knees, foread your names, as you have kindly put them, and your wants, fo far as we remember them, before the Father of mercies, and the Author of every perfect gift. Let our worthless names still find a place in your memory, when you remember your brethren distant in the slesh, but near in the Spirit: among fuch vouchfafe to reckon, dear Brethren, your very affectionate and truly obliged fervants in Christ, I. and M. F.

To Mrs. Doller.

Madeley, Nov. 1783.

ND were my dear Brother and fister Dolier Deafed by the receipt of a letter from such an unworthy worm? Oh that I could convey fome word from the mouth of my adorable Lord to your hearts! Oh that he would permit me, his poor creature, to drop a fentence, which may prove an encouragement to my dear friends in their way! You ask, "Shall I hope to attain the clean heart, and walk in purity while here below?" Why not? " Abraham hoped against hope, and there fprang from him, as good as dead, as the stars of the heaven for multitude." Does un. belief fay-" Thou art dead; thou hast out stayed thy day, and it is all over?" then, arise out of the dust, rouse up all your powers; against hope, believe

believe in hope, and by faith receive firength to apprehend the fulness of God. Remember Christ is in your faith; hold faith and you hold Christ. If you know not how to get hold on faith, remember it is in the promise: seek for a promise, and lay hold there. But if you cry out, "I fee the links of the chain fo far off, that, alas! I cannot take hold on the promise; I den't know which is for me, I cannot reach fo far;" well, don't faint yet; there is another link still lower, that is to fay, your wants. Can you be fure there is a wound within; are you certain you are a finner? Well, then, reach your hand hither, "I came not to call the righteous, but finners." Are you a helpless sinner? "To them who have no might, he increaseth strength." Are you an ungrateful, backfliding finner? Hear him fay, "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; but return unto me faith the Lord." And if you doubt, whether you may believe for a great measure of holiness; whether your soul, already in old age and barren, shall believe for abundant fruitfulness; answer yourself my dear friend, from that word, "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely. I have just told Mrs. Smyth of one of your fisters here, once a deeper unbeliever than yourself, but now quite full of God: I refer you to her letter. O my God, in mercy let thy power rest on thy dear fervants! Convey, even by this poor scrawl, some power to their hearts; some fresh light into the mighty chain, which begins with man's wickedness, hangs on God's mercy in the promises, is continued by faith and victory springing therefrom, and ends with Christ's fulness becoming all in all. We pray the God of love to be with your children, and all who meet with them. Tell fifter Hammond to keep hold of the chain: it shall draw

draw her into the holy of holies. With our kindest, and most grateful remembrance of you both, we remain, your fincere, but unworthy friends,

J. and M. F.

To Mr. HENRY BROOKE.

My dear Brother, Madeley, April 27, 1784, ERCY, peace, and perfect love attend you, your dear Partner, and the dear friends under your roof, with whom I beg you may abide under the crofs, till, with John, Mary and Salome, &c. you all can fay, We are "crucified with him, and the life we now live, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us.

You are certainly right, when you prefer the inward to the outward: The former is the fafer; but both together make up the beauty of holinefs. The inward life may be compared to the husband, the outward to the fruitful wife: What God hath joined together, let no man, nor even angel put

afunder.

With respect to the glory of the Lord, "it is at hand," whatever false wisdom and unbelief may whisper to our hearts: It can be no farther off, than the presence of Him, who fills all in all. Our wrong notions of things are a main hindrance to our stepping into it: And perhaps our minding more the cherubims of glory, than the plain tables, and the manna hid in the ark." "There is a passing," says Bromley, "from the " outward to the inward, and from the inward to " the inmost, and it is only from the inmost, that "we can fee the Lord's spiritual glory."—Pray, my dear brother, when you get fo fixed in the inmost, as not to lose fight of him, who dwells in the light, and in the thick darkness, may we share your joy. Love will make me partake of your With happiness.

With respect to what you say, of the kingdom not coming with the outward pomp, which is difcoverable by the men of the world, it is firifly true; but, that there is an inward display of power and glory under pentecostal Christianity is undeniable, both from our Lord's promises to his disciples, and from their experiences, after the kingdom was come to them with power. It is, fometimes, fuggefied to me, that, as the apostacy hath chiefly confifted in going after the pomp of the whore of Babylon, fo that while the woman, who fled into the wilderness, remains there as a widow, the must be deprived even of those true ornaments, and of that spiritual glory which was bestowed upon her on the day of Pentecost, the day of her espousals. I do not, however, close in with the fuggestion, as I am not sure, that it cannot come from fatan transformed into an angel of light, to rob me of a bright jewel of my Christian hope. To wait in deep refignation, and with a constant attention to what the Lord will please to do, or fay concerning us, and his Church; and to leave to him the times and the feafons, is what I am chiefly called to do; taking care in the mean while of falling into either ditch :- I mean into speculation, which is careless of action, or into the activity, which is devoid of spirituality. I would not have a lamp without oil, and I could not have oil without a lamp, and a vessel to hold it in for myself, and to communicate it to others.

I thank you, my dear friend, for the books you have fent me. I read, with great pleasure, Ramfay's Theological Works, which were quite unknown to me. My good wishes attend both your brothers. Fare you all well in Christ: So prays,

To Mrs. GREENWOOD.

My dear Friend, Madeley, June 20, 1784; I Shall never forget the mercy, which the living and the dead have shewed me; but the fight of Mr. Greenwood in his fon, has brought some of my Newington scenes fresh to my remembrance, and I beg leave to convey my tribute of thanks back by his hands. Thanks! Thanks! What nothing but words? Here is my humbling case? I with to requite your manifold kindness, but I cannot; and fo I must be satisfied to be ever your insolvent debtor. Nature and grace do not love it. Proud thankful grace would be glad to put fomething in the scale opposite to that, which you have filled with fo many favours. But what shall I put? I with I could fend you all the bank of England, and all the gospel of Christ; but the first is not mine, and the fecond is already yours: fo praying the Lord Jesus to make up my deficiencies with you, as he has done with his Father, I remain your still unprofitable, and still obliged Lazarus, I. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Sept. 13, 178; SURELY the Lord keeps us both in slippery places, that we may still fit loose to all below. Let us do so more and more, and make the best of those days which the Lord grants us to finish the work he has given us to do. O let us fall in with the gracious designs of his providence; trim our lamps, gird our loins, and prepare to escape to the heavenly shore, as Paul did when he saw the leaky ship ready to go to the bottom, and made himself ready to swim to land.

I keep in my centry box till Providence removes me: my fituation is quite fuited to my little

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ftrength; I may do as much or as little as I please, according to my weakness; and I have an advantage, which I can have no where elfe in fuch a degree-my little field of action is just at my own door, so that if I happen to over-do myself, I have but a step from my pulpit to my bed, and from my bed to my grave. I wish brother Tandy joy about opposition, this muft be, and the more of it the more will the word of God prevail. If I had a body full of vigour and a purfe full of money, I should like well enough to travel about as Mr. Wesley does, but as Providence does not call me to it, I readily submit. The fnail does best in its shell: were it to aim at gallonning like the washorse, it would be ridiculous indeed. God, my wife, who joins me in thanks to you for your kind offer, is quite of my mind with respect to the call we have to a fedentary life. We are two poor invalids, who between us make half a labourer.

We shall have tea cheap, and light very dear: I don't admire the exchange. Twenty thousand chambers walled up, and filled with foul air are converted into so many dungeons for the industrious artisan, who, being compelled by this murderous tax, denies himself the benefit of light and air. Blessed be God, the light of heaven and the air of the spiritual world is still free: may we open doors and windows to let it into our souls, which shall be purished and enlightened by these

heavenly guests.

My dear partner sweetly helps me to drink the dregs of life, and to carry with ease the daily cross. Neither she nor I are long for this world; we see it, we feel it, and by looking at death and his Conqueror, we fight before hand our last battle, with that last enemy whom our dear Lord hath overcome for us. That we may triumph over

him with an humble, Christian courage, is the prayer of, my dear friend, Yours,

J. F.

To Mrs. THORNTON.

My dear Friend, Madeley, Jan. 21, 1785. I Cap't express how much I was concerned at hearing of Mr. Greenwood's illness: my poor prayers have heartily attended him. I want much to hear of his better state of health. Give mine and my wife's kindest love to him; and should change of air, now the spring is coming on, be likely to be of service to him, we desire both him, and you, and Mrs. Greenwood to remember, that you have at Madeley a country retreat, free from the noise of London, and the hurry of business, where we should be glad to have an opportunity of requiting the kindness shewed to me both by the living and the dead.

O that the Lord would make both his cup and yours run over! Between the living and the dead, (being dying worms ourselves) what manner of people ought we to be in our generation? If we cannot be what we would, burning and shining lights, shewing forth the glory, the mercy, the love of our Lord, as those, who slame with indefatigable zeal, and run a race of immense labours, let us at least lie meekly at Christ's feet, as Mary, or patiently hang on the cross, as our

common Lord.

I want much to know, how you all do in foul and body: as for me, I make just shift to fill up my little centry box, by the help of my dear Partner. Had we more strength we should have opportunity enough to exert it. O that we were but truly faithful in our little place, your great stage of London is too high for people of little ability and little strength, and therefore we are afraid of venturing upon it, lest the consequence should

should be bringing new burdens on our generous friends. We should be glad to rise high in usefulness; but God, who needs us not, calls us to sink in deep resignation and humility. His will be done! That God would bless you with all his choicest blessings, for time and eternity, is the sincere prayer of my dear Friends, your obliged servants, I. and M. F.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Madeley, Feb. 11, 1785.

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ERCY, righteousness, peace and joy be mul-tiplied to dear Lady Mary, and to all, who are dear and near unto her, from the Father of mercies, thro' the Son of his boundless love, and thro' the Spirit of infinite love, which the Father breathes continually towards the Son, and the Son towards the Father! So prays John Fleicher. And who are we, my Lady, that we should not be fwallowed up by this holy, loving, living Spirit, which fills heaven and earth? If we could exclude him from our hearts, we might vilely fet up felf in opposition to him, who is all in all. But whether we confider it or not, there he is, a true, hely, loving, mereiful God. Affent to it, my Lady; believe it, rejoice in it. Let him be God, all in all; your God in Christ Jesus; your brother, who is flesh of your flesh, bone of your bone; your Surety, who payeth all your debt, in whom the Father was reconciling you and us unto himself, and in whom we are accepted. What an ocean of love to fwim in-to dive into! Don't be afraid to venture, and to plunge with all yours; especially our dear friends in St. James's Place, Mrs. G and Mrs. L, &c. I am, &cc.

J. F.

To Mr. HENRY BROOKE.

My dear Brother, Madeley, Feb. 28, 1785. XYE are all shadows. Your mortal parent hath paffed away; and we pals away after him. Bleffed be the Author of every good and perfect gift, for the shadow of his eternal paternity displayed to us in our deceased parents. What was good, loving, and lovely in them, is hid with Christ in God; where we may still enjoy it implicitly, and where we shall explicitly enjoy it, when he shall appear. A lesson I learn daily, is to fee things and perfons in their invisible root, and in their eternal principle; where they are not subject to change, decay, and death: But where they blossom and shine in the primeval excellence allotted them by their gracious Creator. By this means, I learn to walk by faith, and not by fight; but like a child, instead of walking straight and firm in this good spiritual way, I am still apt to cling here or there; which makes me cry, "Lord " let me see all things more clearly, that I may " never mistake a shadow for the substance, nor " put any creature, no not for a moment, in the " place of the Creator; who deferves to be loved, " admired, and fought after with all the powers of our fouls."

Traceing his image in all the footsteps of nature, or looking for the divine signature on every creature, as we should look for the king's image on an old rusty medal, is true Philosophy; and to find out that, which is of God in ourselves, is the true Wisdom,—genuine godliness. I hope you will never be afraid, nor ashamed of it. I see no danger in these studies and meditations, provided we still keep the end in view,—the all of God, and the shadowy nothingness of all that is visible.

With respect to the great pentecostal display of the Spirit's glory, I still look for it within and without;

without; and to look for it aright is the leffon I am learning. I am now led to be afraid of that in my nature, which would be for pomp, shew, and visible glory. I am afraid of falling by such an expectation into what I call a spiritual judaiz. ing; into a looking for Christ's coming in my own pompous conceit, which might make me reject him, if his wisdom, to crucify mine, chose to come in a meaner way; and if, instead of coming in his Father's glory, he chose to come meek, riding, not on the cherubim, but on the foal of an ass. Our Saviour faid, with respect to his going to the feast, " My time is not yet come:" whether his time to come and turn the thieves and buyers out of the outward Church is yet come, I know not. I doubt Jerusalem, and the holy place, are yet given to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. But my Jerusalem! why it is not fwallowed up of the glory of that which comes down from heaven is a question, which I wait to be folved by the teaching of that great Prophet, who is alone poffessed of Urim and Thummim. The mighty power to wrestle with him is all divine: and I often pray

"That mighty faith on me bestow,
Which cannot ask in vain,
Which holds, and will not let thee go,
Till I my suit obtain:
Till thou into my soul inspire,
That perfect love unknown,
And tell my infinite desire,
Whate'er thou wilt be done."

In short, the Lord crucifies my wisdom and my will every way; but I must be crucified as the thieves. "All my bones must be broken;" for there is still in me that impatience of wisdom, which would stir, when the tempter says, "Come down from the cross." It is not for us to know

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the times and seasons, the manner and mystical means of God's working; but only to hunger and thirst, and lie passive before the Great Potter. In short, I begin to be content to be a vessel of clay or of wood, so I may be emptied of self, and filled with my God, my all. Do not give up your consident hope: It saves still secretly, and hath a present, and, by and by will have a great re-

compence of reward.

I am glad, exceeding glad, that your dear Partner goes on fimply and believingly. Such a companion is a great bleffing, if you know how to make use of it. For when two of you shall agree touching one thing in prayer, it shall be done. My wife and I endeavour to fathom the meaning of that deep promise; join your line to ours, and let us search what, after all, exceeds knowledge, I mean the wisdom, and the power, the love and faithfulness of God.

My wife and I embrace you both; and pray you would help one another, and us, by your prayers. Adieu. Be God's, as the French fay; and fee God yours in Christ, for you, and for all our dear brethren. We are, your obliged friends, I. and M. F.

Mr. MELVILL HORNE.

Dear Brother, Madeley, May 10, 1785.

Am forry you should have been uneasy about the books: I received them safely, after they had lain for some time at Salop. I seldom look into any book, but my Bible; not out of contempt, as if I thought they could not teach me what I do not know; but because "Vita brevie, Ars longa:" I may never look into either of them again.

Go on improving yourfelf by reading, but above all by meditation and prayer: And allow our Lord to refine you in the fire of temptation. Where

you fee a want, at home or abroad, within or without, look upon that want, as a warning to avoid the cause of the leanness you perceive, and a call to fecure the bleffings, which are ready to take their flight; for fometimes true riches, like those of this world, make themselves wings and flee away: The heavenly dove may be grieved. and take its flight to humbler, and more peaceful roofs. I am glad you do not want hard or violent measures: I hope you never will countenance them, no not against what you dislike. I believe things will turn out very well at the Conference, and I shall be a witness of it, if the Lord of the harvest gives me a commission to be a spectator of the order and quietness of those who shall be there: if not, I shall help you by prayer to draw from far the bleffing of love upon our friends.

In being moderate, humble, and truly defirous to be a Christian, that is, to be the least, the last, and the servant of all, we avoid running ourselves into difficulties, we escape many temptations, and many mortifying disappointments. For my part, as I expect nothing from men, they cannot disappoint me; and as I expect all good things from God, in the time, way, measure, and manner it pleaseth him, to bestow, here I cannot be disappointed, because he does, and will do all things well.

I trust you labour for God and souls, not for praise and self. When the latter are our aim, God, in mercy, blesses us with barrenness, that we may give up Barrabas, and release the humble Jesus, whom we crucify afresh by setting the thies on the throne, and the Lord of glory at our footstool: For so do those who preach Christ out of contention, or that they may have the praise of men. That God may bless you, and your labours, is the prayer of your old brother, J. F.

To JAMES IRELAND, Efq.

My dear Friend, Madeley, July 19, 1785.

DLESSED be God, we are still alive, and in the midst of many infirmities, we enjoy a degree of health spiritual and bodily. O how good was the Lord, to come as Son of Man to live here for us, and to come in his Spirit to live in us for ever! This is a mystery of godliness: The Lord make us full witnesses of it!

A week ago, I was tried to the quick by a fever with which my dear Wife was afflicted: I wo perfons whom she had visited having been carried off, within a pistol shot of our house, I dreaded her being the third, but the Lord hath heard prayer and she is spared. Oh what is life! On what a stender thread hang everlasting things! My comfort however is, that this thread is as strong as the will of God, and the word of his grace, which cannot be broken. That grace and peace, love and thankful joy may ever attend you, is the wish of your most obliged friends,

J. and M. F.

SIX LETTERS,

ON THE

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION

OF THE

SON OF GOD.

FIRST LETTER.

SIR.

XX YHEN I had the pleasure of seeing you last, you feemed furprized to hear me fay, That the Son of God, for purposes worthy of his wifdom, manifests himself, sooner or later, to all his fincere followers, in a spiritual manner, which the The affertion appeared to world knows not of. you unfcriptural, enthufiaftical, and dangerous. What I then advanced to prove, that it was scriptural, rational, and of the greatest importance, made you defire I would write to you on the mysterious Subject. I declined it, as being unequal to the task; but having fince confidered, that a mistake here may endanger your foul or mine, I fit down to comply with your request: And the end I propose by it, is either to give you a fair opportunity of pointing out my error, if I am wrong; or to engage you, if I am right, to feek what I esteem the most invaluable of all bleffings, -revelations of Christ to your own foul, productive of the experimental knowledge of him, and the present ehjoyment of his falvation.

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As an architect cannot build a palace, unless he is allowed a proper spot to erect it upon, so I shall not be able to establish the doctrine I maintain, unless you allow me the existence of the proper senses, to which our Lord manifests himself. The manifestation I contend for, being of a spiritual nature, must be made to spiritual senses; and that such senses exist, and are opened in, and exercised by regenerate souls, is what I design to prove in this letter, by the joint testimony of Scripture, our Church, and Reason.

I. The Scriptures inform us, that Adam lost the experimental knowledge of God by the fall. His foolish attempt to hide himself from his Creator, whose eyes are in every place, evidences the total blindness of his understanding. The same veil of unbelief, which hid God from his mind, was drawn over his heart and all his spiritual senses. He died the death, the moral spiritual death, in consequence of which the corruptible body sinks into the grave, and the unregenerate

foul into hell.

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In this deplorable state Adam begat his children. We, like him, are not only void of the life of God, but alienated from it, thro' the ignorance that is in us. Hence it is, that tho' we are poffessed of such an animal and rational life, as he retained after the commission of his sin, yet we are, by nature, utter strangers to the holiness and bliss he enjoyed in a state of innocence. Tho' we have, in common with beafts, bodily organs of fight, hearing, tafting, fmelling and feeling, adapted to outward objects; tho' we enjoy, in common with devils, the faculty of reasoning upon natural truths, and mathematical propositions, yet we do not understand supernatural and divine things. Notwithstanding all our speculations about them, we can neither see, nor taste them truly, unless we are risen with Christ, and taught of God. M 2 We

We may, indeed, speak and write about them, as the blind may speak of colours, and the deaf dispute of sounds, but it is all guess-work, hear-say, and mere conjecture. The things of the Spirit of God cannot be discovered, but by spiritual, internal senses, which are, with regard to the spiritual world, what our bodily, external senses are with regard to the material world. They are the only medium, by which an intercourse between Christ and our souls can be opened and maintained.

The exercise of these senses is peculiar to those, who are born of God. They belong to what the Apostles call "the new man, the inward man, the new creature, the hidden man of the heart." In believers, this hidden man is awakened and raifed from the dead, by the power of Christ's refurrection. Christ is his life, the Spirit of God is his spirit, prayer or praise his breath, holiness his health, and love his element. We read of his hunger, thirst, food and drink, garment and habitation, armour and conflicts, pain and pleafure, fainting and reviving, growing, walking, and working. All this supposes senses, and the more these senses are quickened by God, and exercifed by the new born foul, the clearer and stronger is his perception of divine things.

On the other hand, in unbelievers, the inward man is deaf, blind, naked, afleep, past feeling; yea, dead in trespasses and sins; and of course, as incapable of perceiving spiritual things, as a perfon in a deep sleep, or a dead man discovering outward objects. St. Paul's language to him is, "Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." He calls him a natural man, one who hath no higher life than that his parents conveyed to him by natural generation,—one who follows the dictates of his own sensual soul, and is neither born of God,

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nor led by the Spirit of God. "The natural man," fays the Apostle, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." He has no sense properly exercised for this kind of discernment, his "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into his heart, the things, which God hath prepared for them that love him."

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The reverse of the natural man is the spiritual, so called, because God hath revealed spiritual things to him by his Spirit, who is now in him a principle of spiritual and eternal life. "The spiritual man," says the Apostle, "judgeth, i. e. discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no one." The high state he is in can no more be discerned by the natural man, than the condition of the natural man can be discerned by a brute.*

St. Paul not only describes the spiritual man, but speaks particularly of his internal, moral senses, Christians, says he, of sull age, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. If he prays, that the love of the Philippians may abound more and more in knowledge, and was acount in all sense or feeling." The scriptures constantly mention, or allude to one or other of these spiritual senses:—Give me leave to produce some instances.

1. To begin with the SIGHT. St. Paul prays, that the eyes of his converts being enlightened, they might know what is the hope of their calling. He reminds them, that Christ had been evidently set forth crucified before their eyes. He assures them, that the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not the gospel; and declares that his commission was to open the eyes of the

^{* 1} Cor. ii. 10-15. Heb. v. 14. † Phil. i. 9.

M 3 Gentiles.

Gentiles, and turn them from darkness to light. Abraham faw Christ's day, and was glad. Moses perfevered, as feeing him who is invisible. David prayed, Open my eyes that I may fee wonders out of thy Law. Our Lord complains, that the heart of unbelievers is waxed gross, that their ears are dull of hearing, and that they have closed their eyes, lest they should fee with their eyes, understand with their hearts, and be converted. He counfels the Laodiceans, to anoint their eyes with eye-falve, that they might fee. He declares, that the world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, because it fees him not; that the things, which belong to the peace of obstinate unbelievers, are, at last, judicially hid from their eyes; and, that the pure in heart shall fee God. St. John testifies, that he, who does evil, hath not feen God; and that darkness hath blinded the eyes of him, that loves not his brother. The Holy Ghost informs us, that believers look at the things which are not feen, and behold the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ. These are the eyes, with which believers see the falvation of God. are so distinct from those of the body, that when our Lord opened them in St. Paul's foul, he fuffered scales to grow over his bodily eyes. And no doubt, when Christ gave outward fight to the blind, it was chiefly to convince the world, that it is he who can fay to blind finners, Receive your fight; fee the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; look unto me and be faved.

2. If you do not admit of a spiritual HEARING, what can you make of our Lord's repeated caution, He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear? And what can be the meaning of the following scriptures:—Hear, O soolish people, who have ears and hear not. Ye uncircumcifed in heart and ears. Ye cannot hear my words; ye are of your father the devil. He, that is of God hearth

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God's word; ye, therefore, hear them not, beeause ye are not of God? Can it be supposed, that our Lord spake of outward hearing, when he The hour cometh, and now is, that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live. My sheep hear my voice. He that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me? Do not all finners stand spiritually in need of Christ's powerful Ephphatha, Be thou opened? Is that man truly converted, who cannot witness with Isaiah, The Lord hath awakened my ear to hear as the learned; and with the Pfalmist, Mine ears hast thou opened? Had not the believers at Ephesus heard Christ, and been taught of him? When St. Paul was caught up into the third heaven, did he not hear words unspeakable? And far from thinking spiritual hearing absurd, or impossible, did he not question, whether he was not then out of the body? And does not St. John positively declare, that he was in the Spirit, when he heard Jesus say, I am the first and the last?

3. How void of meaning are the following paffages, if they do not allude to that SENSE, which is calculated for the reception of, what the barrenness of human language compels me to call fpiritual perfumes? The *smell* of thy ointments is better than all spices. The *smell* of thy garments is like the fmell of Lebanon, all thy garments smell of myrth, aloes, and cassia; and because of the Javour of thy good ointments, thy

name is as ointment poured forth.

4. If believers have not a spiritual faculty of TASTING divine things, what delufion must they be under, when they say, Christ's fruit is sweet to their taste; and cry out, How sweet are thy words to my taste! they are sweeter than honey to my But how justly can they speak thus, if they have tafted the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and, as new born babes, defire the fincere

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fincere milk of it? Surely, if they eat the flesh of the Son of God, drink his blood, and taste that the Lord is gracious, they have a right to testify, that "his love is better than wine;" and to invite those, that hunger and thirst after righteousness, to taste that the Lord is good, that they also may be satisfied with his goodness and mercy, as

with marrow and fatnefs.

5. If we are not to be perfect Stoicks in Religion, if we should have one degree more of devotion, than the marble statues, which adorn our churches, we should have, I think, some FEEL-ING of our unworthiness, some sense of God's majesty. Christ's tender heart was pierced to atone for, and to remove the hardness of ours. God promises to take from us the heart of stone, and to give us an heart of flesh, a broken and contrite heart, the facrifice of which, he will not despise. Good king Josiah was praised, because his heart was tender. The conversion of the three thousand, on the day of pentecost, began by their being pricked in their heart. We are directed to feel after God, if hapily we might find him. Our Lord himself is not ashamed to be touched, in heaven, with a feeling of our infirmities. And St. Paul intimates, that the highest degree of obduracy and apostacy, is to be past feeling, and to have our conscience seared as with a hot iron.

I hope, Sir, you will not attempt to fet afide for many plain passages, by saying, they are unsit to support a doctrine, as containing empty metaphors, which amount just to nothing. This would be pouring the greatest contempt on the perspicuity of the oracles of God, the integrity of the sacred writers, and the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, who inspired them. As certainly as there is a spiritual life, there are senses calculated for the display and enjoyment of it: And these senses exist no more in metaphor, than the life, that

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exerts itself by them. Our Lord settled the point, when he declared to Nicodemus, that no man can see the kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter, except he is first born of God, born of the Spirit; just as no child can see this world, except he is first born of a woman, born of the sless. Hence it appears, that a regenerate soul hath its spiritual senses opened, and made capable of discerning what belongs to the spiritual world, as a new born infant hath his natural senses unlocked, and begins to see, hear, and taste, what belongs to the material world into which he enters.

II. These declarations of the Lord, his prophets, and apostles, need no confirmation. Nevertheless, to shew you, Sir, that I do not mistake their meaning, I shall add the testimony of our own excellent Church. As the strictly agrees with the scripture, she makes also frequent mention of spiritual fensations, and you know, Sir, that fenfations necessarily suppose fenses. She prays, that God would "give us a due sense of his inestimable love in the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus Christ."* She begs, that he would " make us know and feel there is no other name than that of Jesus, whereby we must be faved." She affirms, that, true penitents feel " the burden of their fins intolerable;"+ that godly persons " feel in themselves the workings of Christ's Spirit;" that " the Lord speaks prefently to us in the scriptures, to the great and endless comfort of all that have any feeling of God in them at all;" that "godly men felt, inwardly, the Holy Ghost inflaming their hearts with the fear and love of God, and that they are miserable wretches, who have no feeling of God

^{*} Thankfgiving. & Office for the fick. + Communion. ; 17 Article.

within them at all : " * And, that, " if we feel the heavy burden of our fins pressing our fouls, and tormenting us with the fear of death, hell, and damnation, we must steadfastly behold Christ cruci-fied, with the eyes of our heart."

Our Church farther declares, that "true faith is not in the mouth and outward profession only, but liveth and firreth inwardly in the heart, and that if we feel and perceive such a faith in us, we must rejoice:"‡ That, " correction tho' painful, bringeth with it a tafte of God's goodness:" That, "if after contrition, we feel our consciences at peace with God, thro' the remission of our fin, it is God, who worketh that great miracle in us;" and she prays, that, " as this knowledge and feeling is not in ourselves, and, as by ourselves, it is not possible to come by it, the Lord would give us grace to know these things, and feel them in our hearts." She begs, that "God would affist us with his Holy Spirit, that we may hearken to the voice of the good Shepherd." | She fets us upon asking continually, that the Lord would "lighten our darkness," and deliver us from the two heaviest plagues of Pharaoh, "blindness and hardness of heart." **. And, she affirms, that "if we will be profitable hearers of the scriptures, we must keep under our carnal senses, taken by the outward words, fearch the inward meaning, and give place to the Holy Ghoft," whose peculiar office it is to open our spiritual senses, as he opened Lydia's heart. † t

If I did not think the testimony of our blessed Reformers, founded upon that of the facred write

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^{*} Hom. on certain places of feripture. † 2 Hom. on the Paf-fion. † Hom. on Faith 1st and 3d Part. § Hom. on the fear of Death, 2d Part. | Hom for Regation week 3d Part. **Hom. on Repent. 2d Part. ‡ Even, prayer and Litany. Hom, on sertain Places of Scrip.

ters, of sufficient weight to turn the scale of your fentiments, I could throw in the declarations of many ancient and modern divines. To instance in two or three only. St. Cyril, in the xiii Book of his Treasure, affirms, that, "men know Jesus is the Lord, by the Holy Ghost, no otherwise than they, who tafte honey, know it is sweet, even by its proper quality." Dr. Smith of Queen's Coll. Cambridge, in his felect discourses, observes after Plotinus, that "God is best discerned rose" τη αφή by an intellectual touch of him." We must, fays he, fee with our eyes, to use St. John's words; we must hear with our ears, and our hands must handle the word of life, ich yas Jung aiobnois is for the foul hath its fense as well as the body." And Bishop Hopkins, in his treatise on the new birth, accounts for the papifts denying the knowledge of falvation, by faying, "It is no wonder, that they who will not trust their natural fenses in the doctrine of transubstantiation, should not trust their spiritual ones in the doctrine of affurance."

III. But instead of proving the point by multiplying quotations, let me intreat you, Sir, to weigh the following observations in the balance of

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r. Do not all grant, there is such a thing as moral sense in the world, and that to be utterly void of it, is to be altogether unsit for social life? If you had given a friend the greatest proofs of your love, would not he be inexcusable, if he felt no gratitude, and had absolutely no sense of your kindness. Now, if moral sense and feeling are universally allowed, between man and man, in civil life, why should it appear incredible, or irrational, that there should be such a thing, between God and man, in the divine life?

2. To conclude, if material objects cannot be perceived by man in his present state, but thro' the medium of one or other of his bodily senses, by a

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parity of reason, spiritual objects cannot be discovered, but thro' one or other of the senses, which belong to the inward man. God being a Spirit, cannot be worshipped in truth, unless he is known in Spirit. You may as soon imagine, how a blind man, by reasoning on what he feels or tastes, can get true ideas of light and colours, as how one, who has no spiritual senses opened, can, by all his reasoning and guessing, attain an experi-

mental knowledge of the invisible God.

Thus from the joint testimony of SCRIPTURE, of our CHURCH, and of REASON, it appears, that spiritual senses are a blessed reality. I have dwelt so long on the proof of their existence for two reasons. First, They are of infinite use in religion. Saving saith cannot subsist and act without them. If St. Paul's definition of that grace be just, if it is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," it must be a principle of spiritual life, more or less, attended with the exercise of these senses, according to the poetic and evangelical lines of Dr. Young;

"My heart awake, FEEL the great truths: To FEEL is to be fired, And to believe, Lorenzo, is to FEEL.

Till professors see the necessity of believing, in this manner, they rest in a refined form of godliness. To the considence of the Antinomians, they may, indeed, join the high profession of the foolish virgins. They may even crown their partial assent to the truths of the gospel with the zeal of Pharisees, and the regularity of moralists: but still they stop short of the new creation, the new birth, the life of God in the soul of man. Nay more, they stumble at some of the most important truths of Christianity, and think the discoveries, that sound believers have of Christ and the spiritual world, are enthusiastical delusions, or,

at least, extraordinary favours, which they can very well do without. Thus, even while they allow the power of godliness to others, they rest satisfied without experiencing it in themselves.

Secondly, What I shall write will depend very much on the existence of spiritual senses; and if this letter convinces you, that they are opened in every new born soul, you will more easily believe, Christ can and does manifest himself by that proper medium; and my letters on divine manifestations will meet with a less prejudiced reader.

That Emmanuel, the light of the world, may direct me to write with soberness and truth, and you to read with attention and candour, is the sin-

cere prayer of, Sir, Yours, &c.

SECOND LETTER.

SIR,

AVING proved, in my first letter, the existence of the spiritual senses, to which the Lord manifests himself, I shall now enter upon that subject, by letting you know, as far as my pen can do it, I. What is the nature of that manifestation, which makes the believer more than con-

queror over fin and death.

1. Mistake me not, for the pleasure of calling me enthusiast. I do not insist, as you may imagine, upon a manifestation of the voice, body, or blood of our Lord, to our external senses. Pilate heard Christ's voice, the Jews saw his body, the soldiers handled it, and some of them were literally sprinkled with his blood; but this answered no spiritual end: They knew not God manifest in the sless.

2. Nor do I understand such a knowledge of our Redeemer's, doctrine, offices, promises, and performances, as the natural man can attain, by

the force of his understanding and memory. All carnal professors, all foolish virgins, by conversing with true Christians, hearing gospel sermons, and reading evangelical books, attain to the historical, and doctrinal knowledge of Jesus Christ. Their understandings are informed; but, alas! their hearts remain unchanged. Acquainted with the letter, they continue ignorant of the Spirit. Boasting, perhaps, of the greatness of Christ's salvation, they remain altogether unsaved; and ful of talk about what he hath done for them, they know nothing of "Christ in them, the hope of

glory."

3. Much less do I mean such a representation of our Lord's person and sufferings, as the natural man can form to himself, by the force of a warm imagination. Many, by feeing a striking picture of Jesus bleeding on the cross, or hearing a pathetic discourse on his agony in the garden, are deeply affected and melted into tears. They raise in themselves, a lively idea of a great and good man unjuftly tortured to death; their foft passions are wrought upon, and pity fills their heaving breafts. But, alas! they remain strangers to the revelation of the Son of God by the Holy Ghost. murder of Julius Cæsar, pathetically described, would have the same effect upon them, as the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. A deep play would touch them as easily as a deep fermon, and much to the same purpose; for in either case, their impressions, and their tears are generally wiped away together.

4. Nor yet do I understand good desires, meltings of heart, victories over particular corruptions, a confidence that the Lord can and will save us, power to stay ourselves on some promises, gleams of joy, rays of comfort, enlivening hopes, touches of love; no, not even foretastes of Christian liberty, and of the good word of God. These

are rather the delighful drawings of the Father, than the powerful revelation of the Son. These, like the star, that led the wise men for a time, then disappeared, and appeared again, are helps and encouragements, to come to Christ, and not a divine union with him, by the revelation of himfelf.

I can more easily tell you, Sir, what this revelation is not, than what it is. The tongues of men and angels want proper words to express the fweetness and glory, with which the Son of God visits the souls that cannot rest without him. This bleffing is not to be described, but enjoyed. to be " written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on paper, or tables of stone, but in the slessly tables of the heart." May the Lord himself explain the mystery, by giving you to eat of the hidden manna, and bestowing upon you the new name, which no man knows, fave he that receives it! In the mean time, take a view of the following rough draft of this mercy; and, if it is agreeable to the letter of the word, pray that it may be engraved on your heart, by the power of the Spirit.

The revelation of Christ, by which a carnal professor becomes a holy and happy possessor of the faith, is a supernatural, spiritual, experimental manifestation of the Spirit, power, and love, and sometimes of the Person of God manifest in the slesh, whereby he is known and enjoyed in a manner altogether new: As new as the knowledge of a man, who never tosted any thing but bread and water, would have of honey and wine, suppose, being distaissied with the best descriptions of those rich productions of nature, he actually

tasted them for himself.

This manifestation is, sooner or later, in a higher or lower degree, vouchsafed to every sincere seeker, thro' the medium of one or more of

the spiritual senses opened in his soul, in a gradual or instantaneous manner, as it pleases God. No fooner is the veil of unbelief which covers the heart rent, thro' the agency of the Spirit, and the efforts of the foul struggling into a living belief of the word: no sooner, I say, is the door of faith opened, than Christ, who stood at the door and knocked, comes in, and discovers himself full of Then the tabernacle of God is grace and truth. His kingdom comes with power. Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost spread thro' the new-born soul; eternal life begins; heaven is open on earth; the conscious heir of glory cries, Abba, Father; and from bleffed experience can witness, that he is come to " Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general affembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of fprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel."

If this manifestation is duly improved, the effects of it are admirable. The believer's heart, now fet at liberty from the guilt and dominion of sin, and drawn by the love of Jesus, pants after greater conformity to his holy will, and mounts up to him in prayer and praise. His life is a course of chearful, evangelical obedience, and his most common actions become good works, done to the glory of God. If he walks up to his privileges, outward objects entangle him no more. Having found the great I AM, the eternal substance, he looks upon all created things as shadows. Man, the most excellent of all, appears to sim altogether lighter than vanity. Yea, doubtless he counts all things but loss, for the excellency of

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the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord; estceming them but dung, that he may win Christ, and, to the last, be found in him, not having his own righteousness, but that which is thro' the faith of Christ: That, by new discoveries of himself, he may know him and the power of his refurrection every day more clearly. In the mean time, he casts his fins and miseries upon Jesus, and Jesus bestows his righteousness and happiness upon him. He puts on Christ, and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Thus, they are mutually interested in each other; and to use St. Paul's endearing expressions, they are espoused and married. Joined by the double band of redeeming love and faving faith, they are one spirit, as Adam and Eve, by matrimony were one flesh. "This is a great mystery, fays the Apostle, but, thanks be to

God, it is made manifest to his faints.*

11. If you ask, Sir, How can these things be? Describe to me the particular manner of these manifestations? I reply in our Lord's words to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Ifrael," nay more, a Christian, " and knowest not these things?" Verily, I fay unto you, tho' we cannot fix the exact mode, and precise manner of the breathing of the Spirit, yet we speak what we do know, and testify what we have seen, but you receive not our witness. Marvel not, however, if we find it impossible to tell you all the particulars of a divine manifestation. You yourself, though you feel the wind, fee its amazing effects, and hear the found of it, cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: Much less could you deferibe it to the fatisfaction of one, who never heard or felt it himself. Many earthly things cannot be conceived by earthly men. The blind, for example, can never conceive the difference of colours; what wonder then if natural men do not understand us, when we tell them of heavenly

things?

Nevertheless, I would in general, observe, that the manner, in which the manifestation of the Son of God is vouchfafed, is not the same in all perfons, nor in the fame person at all times. wind bloweth where it lifteth, much more the Spirit of the living God. His thoughts are not as our thoughts: he dispenseth his bleffings, not as we expect them, but as it pleases him. Most commonly, however, the finner, driven out of all his refuges of lies, feels an aching void in his foul. Unable to fatisfy himfelf any longer, with the husks of empty vanity, dry morality, and speculative christianity; and tired with the best form of godliness which is not attended with the power of it, he is brought to a spiritual samine, and hungers after heavenly food. Convinced of unbelief, he feels the want of the faith of God's operation. He fees, that nothing short of an immediate display of the Lord's arm can bring his foul into the kingdom of God, and fill it with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Sometimes, encouraged by lively hopes, he struggles into liberty of heart, and prays with groanings, which cannot be uttered: At other times, almost finking under a burden of guilty fear, or stupid unbelief, he is violently tempted to throw away his hope, and go back to Egypt; but an invisible hand supports him, and, far from yielding to the base suggestion, he resumes courage, and determines, to follow on to know the Lord, or to die feeking him. Thus he continues wandering up and down in a spiritual wilderness, until the Lord gives him the rest of faith, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not feen.

This evidence comes various ways. Sometimes, the spiritual eye is first opened, and chiefly, chiefly wrought upon. Then the believer, in a divine, transformed light, discovers God in the man Christ, perceives unspeakable glories in his despised person, and admires infinite wisdom, power, justice, and mercy, and in the blood of the erofs. He reads the scriptures with new eyes. The mysterious book is unsealed, and every where testifies of him whom his foul loves. He views experimentally, as well a doctrinally, the fuitableness of the Redeemer's offices, the firmness of his promifes, the fufficiency of his righteoufnefs, the preciousness of his atonement, and the completeness of his falvation. He sees, and feels his interest in all. Thus he beholds, believes, wonders, and adores. Sight being the nobleft fenfe, this fort of manifestation is generally the brightest.

Perhaps his spiritual ear is first opened, and that voice which raises the dead, "Go in peace, thy fins are forgiven thee," passes with power through his waiting soul. He knows, by the gracious effect, it is the voice of Him, who said once, "Let there be light, and there was light." He is sensible of a new creation, and can say, by the testimony of God's Spirit, bearing witness with his spirit,—This is my beloved's voice; he is mine, and I am his, I have redemption, thro' his blood, even the forgiveness of my fins: And having much forgiven, he loves much, and obeys in proportion.

Frequently also Christ manifests himself, first and chiefly to the spiritual feeling. He takes the burden of guilt, dejection, and sin, from the heavy-laden soul; and in the room of it, imparts a strong sense of liberty, peace, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The ransomed sinner, enabled to overcome racking doubts or dull insensibility, believes now with the heart unto righteousness, and makes confession with the mouth unto salvation. Surely, says he, In the Lord, I have righ-

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teousness and strength. This is the finger of God, This day is falvation come to my foul. None but Jesus could do this for me. The Lord he is God; he is my Lord and my God. This manifestation is generally the lowest, as being made to a lower fense; therefore great care ought to be taken, not to confound it with the firong drawings of the Father, on which it borders. Some babes in Christ, who, like young Samuel, have not yet their fenses properly exercised to know the things freely given to them of God, are often made uneafy on this very account. Nor can they be fully fatisfied, until they find the effects of this manifestation are lasting, or they obtain clearer ones by means of the nobler fenfes,—the fight or hearing of the heart.

of Christ, which are made to the internal senses, because such only are promised to all; yet I cannot without contradicting scripture, deny, that the external senses have been wrought upon in some manifestations. When Abraham saw his Saviour's day he was, it seems, allowed to wash his feet with water, Gen. xviii. 3. as afterwards the penitent harlot did with her tears. And Saul, in his way to Damascus, saw Jesus's glory and heard his voice both externally and internally, for they, "that journeyed with him, saw the light, and heard a voice," though they could not distinguish the words

which were spoken.

Sometimes also manifestations, though merely internal, have appeared external to those, who were favoured with them. When the Lord called Samuel, in Shiloh, the pious youth supposed the call was outward, and ran to Ely, saying, Thou callest me: But it seems the voice had struck his spiritual ear only, otherwise the high priest, who was within hearing, would have heard it, as well as the young prophet. And though Stephen sted-fastly

fastly looked up to heaven, as if he really saw Christ there with his bodily eyes, it is plain he discovered him only with those of his faith, for the roof of the house where the court was held, bounded his outward sight; and that if Christ had appeared in the room, so as to be visible to common eyes, the council of the Jews would have seen him, as well as the pious prisoner at the bar.

Hence we learn,—1st, That the knowledge of spiritual things, received by spiritual sense, is as clear, as the knowledge of natural things, obtained by bodily fense. 2dly, That it is sometimes possible to be doubtful, whether the outward eye or ear is not concerned in particular revelations; fince this was not only the case of Samuel, but of St. Paul himself, who could not tell. whether the unspeakable words, he heard in paradife, struck his bodily ears, or only those of his foul. 3rdly, That no stress is to be laid upon the external circumstances, which have sometimes accompanied the revelation of Christ. If aged Simeon had been as blind as old Isaac, and as much disabled from taking the child Jesus in his arms as the paralytic, the internal revelation he had of Christ could have made him fay with the fame affurance, Now Lord, let thy fervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have feen thy falvation. If the Apostle had not been struck to the ground, and his eyes dazzled by outward light, his conversion would not have been less real, provided he had been inwardly humbled and enlightened. And, if Thomas, waving the carnal demonstration he infifted upon, had experienced only in his inner man, that Christ is the refurrection and the life, he could have confessed him, with as great a consciousness he was not mistaken, as when he cried out, My Lord, and my God!

.I am, Sir, Yours, &c.

THIRD LETTER.

IV. WHY the Lord manifests himself to the children of men is an important question, which I now come to consider. It is not, we may easily think, for the gratification of their curiosity, but for purposes worthy of his wisdom; and what these are, we shall soon learn, if we reduce divine manifestations to three general classes, Extraordinary, Ordinary, and Mixt Ones; and then consider the design and use of each, as it may be collected from scripture.

I. To begin with manifestations of the Extraordinary Kind: they are such as are either merely external, or vouchsafed to a few only on particular occasions, and are by no means essential to

falvation.

- 1. Some of these are calculated to rouse the thoughtles into consideration. Of this kind was the manifestation some were favoured with, a little before our Lord's passion. "As he prayed, there came a voice from heaven, saying, I have gloristed my name, and will glorify it again. The people, that stood by, and heard it, said, it thundered;" they looked upon the extraordinary call as something common and natural. "Others said, An angel spake to him. But Jesus said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."
- 2. Others are intended as a last warning to notorious sinners. Of this nature was the terrifying sight Nebuchadnezzar had, in his second dream of "a Watcher and Holy One coming down from heaven, and crying aloud, Cut down the tree." And that of the mysterious hand, which wrote Belshazzar's doom on the wall, while he profaned the sacred vessels in his night revels.

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3. Some are defigned for the protection of Cod's people, and the destruction or humiliation of their proud enemies. As when the "Lord looked to the Egyptians, thro' the pillar of fire, and troubled their host:" When "He cast down great stones from heaven' upon the armies of the five kings, who fought against Israel: Or when he manifested his presence in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, to quench the violence of the flame, preferve the three confessors, and convince the raging tyrant, that God's kingdom ruleth over all.

4. The defign of others is to encourage the children of God in dangerous enterprizes, or direct them in important steps. Of this kind was that to Joshua, before he began the conquest of Canaan; and that to St. Paul, when the Lord stood by him in the prison, and informed him he must

bear witness to him also at Rome.

5. Some are calculated to appoint some persons to uncommon fervices and trials, or to the prophetic and ministerial office. As that in which Noah was commissioned to build the ark, Abraham to offer up Isaac, Moses to deliver Israel. Nathan to reprove David, Balaam to bless Israel, and Jeremiah to preach to the Jews.

6. Others again are defigned to answer providential ends for the deliverance of the people of God, as those of Gideon; or spiritual ends of reproof, instruction, and consolation to the church throughout all ages, as most of the revelations vouchfafed to the Prophets, and to St. John.

II. The manifestations essential either to the conversion of finners, or edification of faints, and which the word of God, and the experiences of Christians shew to be common to all believers, in all ages of the church, are of the Ordinary Kind, and their use or design is,

1. To make the word, spirit and life, "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword,

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piercing even to the dividing asunder soul and spirit," that the gospel may not come to sinners "in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."

2 To ease an anguished conscience, and impart the peace of God to a troubled mind: as in the case of broken-hearted David, mourning Hezekiah, weeping Peter, and Paul agonizing in

prayer.

3. To reveal Christ to us, and in us, so as to make us savingly believe, and know, in whom we have believed, according to the experiences of Peter, Lydia, Cornelius, and every living member of Christ.

4. To open a bleffed intercourse, and keep up a delightful communion with Christ; as appears from the experiences of believers illustrated in the

Canticles.

5. To filence the remains of felf-righteousness, and deepen the humiliation of our souls; as in the case of Job. To make us grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. To bruise satan under our feet, yea to bruise the serpent's head in our hearts, and seal the exceeding great and precious promises given to us, that we might be partakers of the divine nature, and continue immoveable, always abounding in the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love. In a word, to "strengthen us with might, by God's Spirit, in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, and we may be filled with all the fullness of God."

o. To prepare us for great trials, support us under them, and comfort us after them. This was our Lord's experience before his temptation, after he had overcome the tempter, and when he was in the height of his agony. This was also the case of David, St. Paul, and of all the apostles, when they had been seourged for the name

of Jesus; and it is still the case of all true and

deep mourners in Sion.

7. And lastly, to make us depart in peace, as Simeon; or die in persect love with our enemies, and in the full triumph of faith, as St. Stephen. All, who live and die in the Lord, partake, more or less, of these ordinary displays of his powerful presence, and I desire you, Sir, to remember, that it is chiefly, if not only, in support of these im-

portant manifestations I take up the pen.

III. The third class of manifestations is that of Mixt Ones; fo called, because they are partly extraordinary, and partly ordinary. Some are ordinary in their defign, and extraordinary in their circumstances. Of this fort was the manifestation to the apostles, Acts iv. 31. The design of it was merely common, i. e. to comfort them under contempt, and encourage them to do good and fuffer evil; but the shaking the place were they were afsembled, was an uncommon circumstance. The · fame thing may be faid of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the 120 who were affembled in the upper room on the day of Pentecost, and some time after upon Cornelius and his foldiers. That they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and spiritual fire was not extraordinary, fince it is the common bleffing, which can alone make a man a Christian. or confirm him in the faith: but that the found of a rushing wind should be heard, and luminous appearances feen resting upon them, and that they should have been enabled to speak the wonderful works of God in other tongues, were uncommon circumstances attending their spiritual bapcism.

Some manifestations are mixt, both as to their design and circumstances. That the iniquity of Isaiah should be put away, and St. Paul convented, were not uncommon things; they are the common effects of ordinary manifestations: But that the prophet should be commissioned to preach to the Vol. IX.

Jews, and the apostle to open the eyes of the Gentiles, were extraordinary circumstances; as also, a slying cherub appearing to the one, and a light brighter

than the fun, blinding the other.

For want of distinguishing properly between what is ordinary and extraordinary in mixt manifestations, persons who are not possessed of a clear head, or what is worfe, of an honest heart, conclude, that none but enthusiasts speak now of divine manifestations. If they hear it affirmed. they must be converted as well as St. Paul, theypertly ask, Whether they are Jews, and whether they must be struck to the earth by a voice from heaven? They willfully forget, that our Lord fpake to his hearers as finful men, and not as bigotted Jews, when he faid, " Except ye be converted, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." They obstinately refuse to see, that the circumstances of the apostle's falling to the ground, &c. were not effential to his conversion, and had no other use, than to make his call more remarkable for the conversion of the Jews, and comfort of the Christians. When the same prejudiced persons are told, that they must be born of the Spirit, and receive the Holy Ghost, as well as Cornelius and his fervants, overlooking the ordinary baptism of the Spirit, they pitch upon the extraordinary circumstance of the gift of tongues, imparted for a feafon, to remove the prejudices of the Jews, and to draw the attention of the Gentiles; and think, with a fneer, and a charge of enthusiasm, to overturn the apostolic saying, " If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Be not deceived, Sir, by these persons. Acknowledge that, fo fure as you want the regenerating knowledge of Christ, you want the manifestations of his Spirit, without which he ean never be known favingly. To return,

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Though I contend only for the ordinary manifestations of Christ, I am far from supposing, that all extraordinary or mixt manifestations have ceased. Such a concession would favour too much of the spirit of infidelity, which prevails in the Church. They are more frequent than many imagine. To instance in one particular, how far I am from acquiescing with that infidel spirit,-I am so attached to that old book the Bible, as to fay of many, who pass for ministers of Christ, "Woe to the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have feen nothing; that fay, the Lord fays, and the Lord hath not fent them." I think the defire of being stiled Reverend, or Right Reverend, and the prospect of a living or a mitre, are very improper motives for affuming the facred character. And I am fuch an enthusiast as to believe our church in the right for requiring that all her ministers should not only be called, but even MOVED. by the Holy Ghost to take the office of Ambassador for Christ upon themselves.

V. Having mentioned the defign and use of ordinary manifestations, it may not be improper, to touch upon the abuse of them. Their genuine tendency is to humble to the dust. The language of those, who are favoured with them, is,-Will God indeed dwell on the earth! Lord what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the fonof man, that thou visitest him! Now, that I see thee, I abhor myself., I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies. I am dust and ashes .-But as there is nothing, which the heart of man cannot be tempted to corrupt and pervert, fo as foon as the power attending the manifestation is a little abated, fatan begins to shoot his fiery darts of spiritual pride. "You are a peculiar favourite of heaven, whispers that old serpent, few are so highly bleffed. All your enemies are scattered;

you need not be so watchful in prayer, and so strict in self-denial: you shall never fall." If the believer is not upon his guard, and quenches not these siery darts with his shield, as fast as the enemy throws them, he is soon wounded, and

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pride kindles again upon him.

St. Paul himself was in danger from this quarter, "There was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, thro' the abundance of the revelations." Aaron and Miriam fell into this snare, when they spake against Moses, saying, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath not he spoken by us also?" David likewife acknowledges his error in this respect: "In my prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved, thou, Lord, of thy goodness hast made my hill so firong;" but my heart was lifted up, and my confidence partly carnal, therefore, "thou didft turn thy face from me, and I was troubled." The way to avoid the danger is to forefee it; to look much to the lowly Jesus, and upon the first approach of a temptation to pride, to give, with double diligence, all the glory to him that graciously bestowed all, and to take, with double care, all the shame of our fins to ourselves. St. Paul's direction in this case is excellent: "Because of unbelief some were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear."

Another genuine effect of divine manifestations is an increase of confidence in the Lord, and of activity in his service. What holy boldness filled the souls of those worthies, who through faith, wrought righteousness, and turned to slight the armies of the aliens? How did the love of Christ constrain the disciples to speak and act for God after the day of Pentecost? Nothing could exceed their fortitude and diligence. Nevertheless,

if the temptation to pride is yielded to, the Comforter is grieved, and carnal fecurity, indolence of spirit, and indulgence of the flesh, insensibly pre-The deluded profesfor tho' shorn of his strength, like Sampson, fancies himself the same. Soul, fays he, thou hast goods laid up for many years, even for ever; tho' the Lord manifest himfelf to thee no more, be neither uneasy nor afraid; he changes not. Sometimes the delufion grows to that height, that the farther he goes from the kingdom of God, the stronger he imagines his faith. He even speaks contemptuously of that king-He calls righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, a frame of sensible feeling, a low dispensation, beyond which he has happily got. He thanks God he can now rest upon the bare word, without an application of it to his heart; that is to fay, he can be fully fatisfied with the letter without the Spirit, he can feed upon the empty husks of notions and opinions, as if they were power and life.

The end of this dreadful mistake is generally a relapse into gross sin; witness the falls of David and Solomon; or what is not much better, a fettleing in a form, without the power of godliness, as the Laodiceans of old, and too many now, who have a name to live and are dead. The only way to avoid this precipice, is to follow the light of the first manifestation, and look daily for new visits from Christ, till he makes his abode with us, and we walk in the light, as he is in the light. A manifestation of the Spirit last year will no more support a foul this year, than air breathed yesterday will nourish the slame of life to day. The fun, which, warmed us last week, must shine again this week. Old light is dead light. A notion of old warmth is a very cold notion. We must have fresh food daily, and though we need not a new Christ, we need, perpetually, new dif-N 3

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plays of his eternal love and power. The Lord taught us this important leffon, by making the manna, he gave Ifrael in the wilderness to disappear every day, and caufing that which was not gathered fresh, to breed worms and stink. Neverthelefs, as the mysterious food kept sweet in the golden pot in the ark, fo does the heavenly power in Christ, to whom every true Israelite will come daily for new supplies of hidden manna, for fresh manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Thousands, by not confidering this, feek the living among the dead, fancying that a living Saviour is to be found in dead experiences, and that all is well tho' they live after the flesh, and are, perhaps, led captive by the devil at his will. But when their fouls awake out of this dangerous dream they will be fensible of their mistake, and frankly acknowledge, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" and that, "if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worfe with them than the beginning."

Leaving these lukewarm, formal, Laodicean professors to the mercy of God, I subscribe myself, Sir, Yours, &c.

FOURTH LETTER.

SIR,

VI. THAT some persons are blessed with clearer, stronger, or earlier manifestations than others, is undeniable; and why it is so, is one of the mysteries of God's kingdom, that shall not be explained until the day of Judgment. In the mean time, the following reslections may possibly cast some light on that dark subject, and help us to say, He does all things well.

1. Our Lord suits the manifestations of himself to the various states of the Church. Under the Mosaic dispensation, which consisted much in externals, divine manifestations had, generally, some external circumstances; but the Christian Church, being formed upon a more spiritual plan, is favoured with revelations of a more spiritual, and internal nature.

2. The Lord confiders us as rational creatures, in a state of probation. Were he to indulge us with powerful, inceffant, overwhelming discoveries of himself, he would rather violently force, than gently lead us to repentance and obedience. Every day is not a day of Pentecost. Soon after the Son of God had feen the heavens open, he was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; and fo is his spouse after him.* St. Paul, by obferving, that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, and that he kept his body under, lest he should become a cast-a-way, intimates his bright, manifestation was not of such continuance and force, but he might have disobeyed, as Jonah did in a similar case. Some have, in fact, resisted bright manifestations in their day: witness Cain, Judas, Balaam, Saul, Nebuchadnezzar, and the Ifraelites who perished in the wilderness; and too many backfliders are refisfting them now. So fure, then, as there is a time of trial for faith, hope, and patience, there is also an abatement of the power, which attends divine manifestations.

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3. Our wife Redeemer proportions the means to the end. If the effect of a manifestation of his love is to be exceeding great, the manifestation must be exceeding bright. Suppose the burden of guilt and hardness, temptation and forrow, under which one groans, is ten times greater than that which oppresses another, it is plain the manifestation, which is to remove the tenfold weight is to be ten times stronger. The same rule holds

also with regard to sufferings and labours. The hotter the fight of afflictions God's children are to go through, the stronger and the brighter also is the celestial armour put upon them at the reve-

lation of the Captain of their Salvation.

4. Neither can it be doubted, but that our good in fixing the degree of divine manifestations, hath a particular respect to the state and capacity of the fouls to whom he discovers himfelf. The deeper finners mourn for him, the deeper he makes them drink of the cup of falvation at his appearing. Bleffed are they, that greatly hunger and thirst after righteousness; their fouls are thereby greatly enlarged to receive the oil of gladness, and the wine of the kingdom. Bleffed are the poor in spirit, those, whose fouls are empty as the vessels of the desolate widow, in the days of Elisha: When the heavenly Prophet shall visit them, the streams of his fulness shall certainly flow according to the degree of their emptiness.

ftronger medicines, according to the state of his patients. So does the physician of souls; he weighs, if I may so speak, every dram of the heavenly power in the scales of goodness and wisdom. He knows what quantity of the heavenly cordial our spirits can bear, and will not, without the greatest care put the strong wine of his powerful love into a weak vessel. He sees, that as some persons can stand for a time, the sight of the meridan sun, when others are hurt by the first appearance of a taper, so some Christians can bear the strong beams of his gracious presence, while others are almost overpowered by his

fainter rays.

6. If some live and die without any manifestations of the Redeemer's love and glory, the reasons of it may possibly be found in the abysses

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of his justice and goodness. They grieve and quench the Spirit, that convinces the world of fin; and it is very fit they should not have him as a Comforter, whom they obstinately reject as a Reprover. Add to this, that as our Lord fore-sees, that if such people were favoured with tokens of his more distinguishing condescension, they would only abuse them, as Cain and the Pharisees did, he puts them not to the trial, nor suffers them to enhance their guilt by trampling richer mercy and love under foot: So that this seeming

feverity is, in fact, real benignity.

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7. The Lord not only proportions the degree of his powerful appearance to the weakness of our fouls but also to that of our bodies. knoweth whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but flesh. If the natural sun, that glorious emblem of our Emmanuel, was to approach as near our earth, and shine as bright as possible, the insufferable blaze and heat would instantly blind and consume us. By a parity of reason, were our bright Sun of Righteousness to manifest his unclouded glory, or appear with-out the tempering medium of his manhood, no fleth could support the fight. The brain, unable to bear the high operations of the foul, would turn, the heart of the wicked, swelfed with intolerable pangs of fear, and that of the righteous, dilated by overwhelming transports of joy, would instantly burst. God therefore fays, "No man can fee my face," without some dimming veil, "and live." Hence arose likewise the grateful exclamations of Manoch and others, when the Lord had manifested himself to them, concealed under human appearances, We have feen God and live! We have beheld him, and are not confumed!

8. This may, perhaps, help us to account, why the Lord still hides his face from some of his sincere seekers. They sit begging by the way side of

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his ordinances, and yet he does not pass by, so as to restore to them their spiritual sight, that they might know him. In all probability he defigns thein such a bright manifestation, as they are not able to bear. When their hearts are strengthened for the heavenly vision, it shall speak. Let them only wait for it. Let patience have its perfect work, and faith in the word be tried to the uttermost; and he, that cometh, will come, and will not tarry. He will bring his reward with him, and a moment of his presence will make them abundant amends for the waiting of an age. Were he to appear, before they are prepared by the humiliation of repentance and the patience of hope, they would be in the case of those carnal Israelites, who, far from being able to commune with God, could not fo much as speak to Moses, when he came down from the mount, without first obliging

him to put a veil over his shining face.

Peter, James, and John were, it feems, the foremost of the apostles in spiritual strength and boldness; nevertheless, the manifestation they had of Christ on the mount almost overwhelmed them. Their bodies funk under the weight of his glory, and when they came out of their fleep or trance, they could not recover themselves, "they knew not what they faid." This had been before the case of Daniel, and was once more that of St. John. The comeliness of the man greatly beloved was turned to corruption: he retained no strength. And the beloved Apostle, when he saw his Saviour with some additional beams of glory, fell at his feet as dead. St. Paul not only lost his fight on fuch an occasion, but was near losing his life, being unable to take any refreshment for three days and three nights. And it is also gencrally supposed, that Moses actually died under the overpowering displays of the Redeemer's love. Hence we learn, that God's way and time are best,

and that we are to leave both to his gracious wifdom; using the means, in which he has promised to manifest himself to those who diligently seek him.

VII. What those means are is what I come in the last place to consider. The agent or author of every divine manifestation is the eternal God, One in Three, and Three in One. The Father reveals, the Son freely discovers himself, and the Holy Ghost freely testifies of him. Nevertheless, the scriptures, in general, attribute this wonder of grace to the blessed Spirit. "No man can" experimentally, "fay, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." It is his peculiar office to convince the world of righteousness, by giving us to know savingly the Lord our righteousness. "He shall glorify me," says Christ, "for he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you." And this he does, without any merit of ours, in the means, which God hath appointed, and which he enables us to use aright.

These means are both outward and inward. The outward are what our Church calls "the means of grace," particularly hearing or reading the word, partaking of the sacraments, and praying together with one accord for the manifestation of the Spirit, as the primitive Christians did, Acts ii.

1. These means are to be used with the greatest diligence, but not to be trusted to; the only proper object of our confidence is God, who works all in all. It was not Moses's rod, which parted the Red Sea, but that Almighty Arm, which once divided the water from the water without a rod. Nevertheless, as Moses was not to throw his rod away, under pretence of trusting in God alone,

neither was he to rely on the weak instrument, as if the divine power resided in it.

Tho' the Lord in general works by means, he ties himself to none, and sometimes works with-

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out any. The fame Spirit, which fell upon Cornelius, while Peter preached, fell upon Peter on the day of Pentecost, without any preaching. And the same Lord, who opened Lydia's heart. by the ministry of St. Paul, opened the heart of St. Paul by the fole exertion of his power. We hence learn, that as on the one hand, we ought not with the profane and enthuliafts to tempt the Lord by neglecting the use of any of any of the means he hath appointed; fo on the other hand, we must beware of confining God to particular means, times, and places, as the bigotted and superstitious do; remembering, that when we are cut off from all outward means, it is our privilege to wait for the immediate display of God's arm, in the use of the inward means.

Of these, the 1st is a believing, there will be a performance of the Lord's promife, and that he is willing and able to manifest himself to us as he does not to the world: this is the very root of prayer, fervency, hope, and expectation. Without the actings of this preparatory faith, the foul droops, and becomes an eafy prey to despondency, vanity, or floth. Where this talent is buried, the Lord seldom works. "Believest thou, that I am able to do this for thee?" is generally the first question, that he puts to the seeker's heart. If it is answered in the negative, he can do no great miracle, because of this unbelief. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged, that St. Paul was blessed with the revelation of the Son of God, without any previous desire or expectation of it. In him, and others, was this fcripture fulfilled, "I was found of them that fought me not, I was manifested to them that asked not after me." But, in general, where the gospel is preached, the Lord will be enquired of by the house of Israel to do this; and if he vifits any with conviction, as he did St. Paul, it is only to make them pray, as that

that apostle did, until he manifests himself, by the Holy Ghost, in a way of consolation and love.

The 2nd inward means of the manifestation of Christ is refignation, as to the particular manner, time, and place of it. Through patience, as well as faith and prayer, we inherit this promifed bleffing. Some, according to their carnal wisdom and forward imagination, mark out the way in which falvation is to come to their hearts; but the Lord. generally, disappoints those unhumbled seekers: tho', as in the case of Gideon, he may gratify one in a thousand: for believers are " not born of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The Jews expected the Messiah, and there they were right: but they expected him in their own way, and there they stumbled and fell, While they looked for a mighty conqueror, another Alexander, to make them great, they overlooked the lowly Prince of Peace, who came to make them good; and, at last, they crucified him as a base impostor. This jewish disposition is in all by nature. Hence Christ is commonly rejected in the Spirit by Christians, as he was in the flesh by the Jews. We would have him come to give us an idle rest, but he appears to teach us to deny ungodliness, and fight the good fight of faith: this we do not like. Our nature wants to step at once into a throne; but he offers first to nail us to the tree, and to crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts: and from this we shrink as from the grave. We expect to be carried at once to the top of Mount Tabor, to fee unutterable glory; but he leads us to Gethsemane to watch and pray, or to Calvary to fuffer and die with him: here we recoil, and do not chuse to know him. Our forward impatience dictates, that he shall instantaneoully turn our midnight into noonday; but instead of manifesting himself at once as the meridian san, he will, perhaps, appear only as the morning star, that our light may shine more and more unto the perfect day. This defeats our counsel, we despise the day of small things, and do not think so low an appearance worth our notice and thanks. If you, Sir, ever seek the saving knowledge of Jesus, never stop till you can witness your fun goes down no more; but, in the mean time, never slight the least ray of heavenly light. The least may open into the broad day of eternity. Cease from your own salse wisdom, and become as a little child, or you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, and see

the King in his beauty.

The 3rd and last inward means, I would recommend to mourners in Sion, is a tender regard for the reproofs of the Spirit, a constant attention to the drawings of the Father, obedience to the calls they have to fecret prayer, and a fear of depending upon their duties, and not folely upon the faithfulness of Jesus. Whoever follows these directions, according to the grace given him, will of course cease from outward evil, and do as he ean, the little good his hand finds to do. This is a better way of waiting for the revelation of Christ, than to lie down in dejection and hopeless unbelief. All those, who fullenly bury their one talent, and willfully retain the accurfed thing, complain in vain that their Lord makes long tarrying. They obstinately grieve his convincing Spirit, and then abfurdly clamour, because he does not reward them for it, by the comforts of his heavenly presence. Let us not be so unreasonable. Let us " frive to enter in at the firait gate," remembering, that, " many shall feek to enter in, and shall not be able." But let us strive lawfully, not making ourselves a righteousness of our own feeking, knocking, and striving. The fun shines not because we deserve it, by undrawing our curtains, but because it is its nature. Jesus visits us, not because of any merit in our prayers, &c. but for his own sake, because his truth and compassion fail not. Free grace opens the door of mercy, not to works and merit, but to want and misery. That you and I may knock and press in, with all needy, penitent, believing sinners, is the earnest wish of a heart, which prompts me to subscribe, myself,

Sir, Yours, &c.

FIFTH LETTER.

SIR.

WHEN I told you, that, in all ages, Jehovah Jesus manifests himself in a peculiar manner to his people, you exclaimed against the affertion as altogether new and unscriptural. It lies upon me therefore to prove, that antiquity and scripture are on my side. I shall then in this letter appeal to the manifestations recorded in the Old Testament. You cannot expect all the revelations of any child of God, much less those of every one, to be mentioned in so short a history as that of the Bible. Nevertheless, enough is said on the point to convince us, that, in every age of the Church, God hath savoured the sons of men with peculiar displays of his presence.

Let us go back as far as Adam himself. Did not the Lord familiarly converse with him before the fall, both when he presented him with a partaner, and when he brought every beast of the field before him, to see what he would call them? Did he not visit him after the fall, to pronounce his sentence, and to promise, that he would become the woman's feed, and bruise the serpent's head? Was not this manifestation granted to Abel, when the Lord had respect to his sacrifice,—the very cause of Cain's envy, wrath, and murder? Did

not Enoch's walking with God imply a constant union and communion with Emmanuel? And how could this union have taken place, if the Lord had not first revealed himself to the Patriarch? Must not two persons meet and agree, be-

fore they can walk and converse together?

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and, in consequence of it, was made acquainted with his righteous defigns, and received directions how to escape from a perishing world. The history of Abraham is full of accounts of fuch manifestations. In one of them, the Lord called him out of his fins, and from his kindred, to go both to the heavenly and earthly Canaan. In others he promifed him Isaac, and Isaac's mysterious Seed. Several years after, for the trial of his faith, he commanded him to facrifice that favourite fon; and when the trial was over, he testified his approbation of Abraham's conduct. He went faither. Read Gen. ch. xviiith, and you will fee, how the divine Philanthropy, or the love of God towards man appeared, in condescending to clothe himself, before hand, with the nature he was to assume in the virgin's womb, and to converse in this undress with the father of the faithful, as a prince with his favourite, or a friend with his confident.

Sarah and Agar, Isaac and Rebekah, had their divine manifestations; but those of Jacob deserve our particular attention. When he fled to Syria from the face of his brother Esau, and lay desolate in a field, having only a heap of stones for his pillow, the God of all consolation appeared to him; "and behold the Lord stood above the mysterious ladder, on which the angels of God ascended and descended, and said, I am the Lordbehold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places, whither thou goes. And Jacob called that place B.thel, the house of God, and the gate

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of heaven." As if he had wanted to intimate; no one ever found the gate of heaven, but by a manifestation of Christ, who is alone the way to the Father, and the door into glory. When the fame patriarch returned to Canaan, and was left alone one night, there wreftled a man with him till the breaking of the day. And when this extraordinary person said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh; he replied, I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me;" and he blessed him there, acknowledging that he had power with man and God, even with him, whose name is Emmanuel, God with us. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, (the face of God) for he faid, I have feen God face to face, and my life is preserved." The design of this manifestation was merely to strengthen his faith, and we learn from it, that the children of faithful Abraham wrestle in prayer with the God-man, as Jacob did, till they prevail, and are bleffed as he was.

Moses was favoured with numberless manifestations, fometimes as prime minister of the King of the Jews, and at other times only as a common believer. "There appeared to him, in the wilderne's of Mount Sinai, the angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush; and when Moses saw it, he drew near, and the voice of the Lord came unto him faying, I am the God of thy fathers," &c. Acts vii. 30. Many partook of a fight equally glorious: "Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and feventy of the elders of Ifrael, went up and saw the God of Ifrael, and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of faphire stone, and as it were of the body of heaven in his clearness; and upon the nobles of the children of Ifrael he laid not his hand; also they saw God, and did eat and drink." Ex. xxiv. 10. 1 .. "Behold," faid Moses upon the occasion, " the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory, and we have heard

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his voice out of the midst of the fire, and we have feen this day, that God doth talk with man, and he liveth." Deut. v. 24. All Ifrael shared sometimes in the glorious manifestation. They all drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, says St. Paul, and that rock was Christ. The cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, fays the Jewish historian, and fire was upon it by night. in the fight of all the house of Israel. " It came to pass as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses, and all the people faw the cloudy pillar, and rose up and worshipped every man in the door of his tent. And the Lord spake to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend." Ex. xxxiii. q. So indulgent was Emmanuel to him, that when he faid, " I befeech thee shew me thy glory, the Lord answered, I will make all my goodness pass before thee; but thou canft not fee my face (without some veil) and live. And (Oh astonishing condescension!) the Lord descended in the cloud, and flood with him, and proclaimed the name of the Lord." Jehovah Jesus, passed before him, and proclaimed Jehovah, Jehovah, i. e. revealed to him the Father and the Holy Ghost one merciful God together with himself. And Moses made hafte, bowed his head towards the earth and worshipped. These displays of divine goodness and glory left a divine impression on the countenance of the man of God; his face shone so transcendantly glorious, that the children of Ifrael were afraid to come nigh him; and he was obliged to put a veil upon it, before he could converse with them. Tho' this appears very extraordinary, the apostles inform us, that what happened to the countenance of Moses, happens to the souls of all believers. By faith they behold the Lord thro' the glass of gospel promises, and beholding him they are made partakers of the divine nature:

to glory.

Joshua. Moses's successor, was blessed with many such manifestations, each of which conveyed to him new degrees of courage and wifdom. To instance in one only: "When he was by Jericho, he lift up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his fword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went to him, and faid, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as Captain of the Lord's host am I come. And Joshua sensible it was Jehovah, fell on his face to the earth, worshipped, and said to him, What says my Lord to his fervant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground; and Joshua did so." Josh. v. 13. Every true discovery of Christ hath a similar effect. It humbles the finner, and makes him worship in the dust. He sees holiness to the Lord written upon every furrounding object; he is loofed from earth and earthly things, and the towering walls of fin fall before him, as those of Jericho, foon after this manifestation, did before Ioshua.

When that Chief was dead, the same heavenly Person, called the Angel of the Lord, came from Gilgal to Bochim and spake such words to all the Children of Israel, that the people were universally melted; they lift up their voice, wept, and sacrificed." Judg. ii. 1. Nothing can so effectually make sinners relent as a sight of him whom they have pierced. When they have it, whatever place they are in becomes a Bochim, a

valley of tears and adoration.

Not long after, the Lord manifested himself to Deborah, and by the wisdom and fortitude communicated municated to her in that revelation, she was enabled to judge Israel, and lead desponding Barak to certain victory through 900 chariots of iron.

The condescension of our Emmanuel appears in a still more striking light, in the manifestation, which he vouchfafed to Gideon. This myfterious " Angel of the Lord, (again and again called Jehovah,) came and fat under an oak in Ophrah, appeared to Gideon and faid, The Lord is with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And the Lord looked upon him, (what a courage infpiring look was this! as powerful no doubt, as that which met curfing Peter's eye, and darted repentance to his heart!) and he faid, Go in this thy might; have not I fent thee? And Gideon faid, Alas! O Lord God, for because I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face. And the Lord faid unto him, Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die." Thus strengthened and comforted he built an altar to Jehovah-Shalom, and threw down the altar of Baal, Judg. vi. 12, &c. Hence we learn, that, when Jesus manifests himself to a sinner, he fills him with a noble contempt of Baal, an effectual resolution to break down his altars, and a divine courage to shake off the yoke of the spiritual Midianites. He imparts to him a comfortable affurance, that the bitterness of death is past, and that Jehovah-Shalom, the God of peace, even Christ our peace, is with him; and the finner, constrained by the love of Christ, gives him his believing heart, and offers facrifices of thankfgiving on that best of altars. Here begins such a free intercourse between the Redeemer and the redeemed, as we find began between the Lord and Gideon, only of a far more spiritual and delightful nature.

Some years after, the same Angel of God appeared to Manoah's wife, and promised her a son.

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Her husband prayed for the same manifestation. God hearkened to his voice. The heavenly Perfonage manifested himself a second time. Manoah asked him his name, and the "Angel said to him, Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret:" I am not yet called Jesus. Manoah offered a burnt-offering, the Angel received it at his hands; and, while he ascended in the slame of the altar, Manoah sell on his sace to the ground, knew that he was the Angel Jehovah, and said to his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God." She comforted him under his sears; and the birth of Sampson, instead of their death, was the consequence of this two-fold manifestation.

There was a time when Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord, that Word, which was afterwards made flesh, yet revealed unto him. The devoted youth worshipped in the dark, till "the Lord appeared again in Shiloh, came, stood, and called Samuel, Samuel; for the Lord revealed himself to him there, by the Word of the Lord." From that memorable time, "the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." The intercourse between God, and his prophet, soon grew to so great a degree, that the sacred historian says, "the Lord told him in his ear," what he wanted him to be informed of. Sam. iii. 7. ix. 17.

David had many manifestations of Christ, and his pardoning love; and, far from supposing this blessing peculiar to himself as a prophet, he declares, that "for this every one that is godly, shall pray to God, when he may be found." Ps. xxxii. 6. He knew his Shepherd's voice so well, that, without it no outward message, though ever so comfortable, could restore peace to his troubled mind. When he had been convinced of his crimes

of adultery and murder, by the close application of Nathan's parable, the prophet assured him the Lord had put away his sin, he should not die. This report would have contented many of our modern penitents; but nothing short of an immediate manifestation of the forgiving God could comfort the royal mourner. "Wash thou me, says he, and I shall be clean." Nathan's words, though ever so true, cannot do this; speak thyself merciful, Lord, "make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken

may rejoice."

Exceeding remarkable was the revelation his fon Solomon was favoured with. "In Gibeon, where he was gone to facrifice, the Lord appeared unto him, in a dream by night, and God faid, Ask what I shall give thee." Conscious of his greatest want, "he asked an understanding heart. The speech pleased the Lord, and God said, Because thou hast asked this thing, I have done according to thy word; lo, I have given it thee; and that also which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour." Though this promife was made to him in a dream, he knew by the change, which he found in himself, when he awaked, and by the powerful evidence, which accompanies divine manifestations, that it was a glorious reality. Fully persuaded of it, he scrupled not to offer peace-offerings, and make a feaft to all his fervants on the occasion. I Kings iii. Nor was this the only time Solomon was thus favoured. When he had built the temple, and prayed for a bleffing upon it, "the Lord appeared to him a fecond time, as he had appeared to him in Gibeon, and faid, "I have heard thy prayer." I Kings ix. 2.

Elijah is so famous for the power he had to obtain divine manifestations by the prayer of faith, that, St. James, who had seen him on the mount with Christ and Moses, proposes him to the church

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for a pattern of successful wrestling with God. And who is the Lord God of Elijah, but the God that manifests himself to his worshippers, in opposition to Baal and other false Gods', from whom neither visits nor answers can be obtained? The Lord answered him by fire at the foot of Mount Carmel, and by showers on the top; and "when he lodged in Mount Horeb in a cave, behold, the Word of the Lord, (Jehovah Jesus) came to him and said, What does thou here Elijah? Go forth stand upon the mount before the Lord. And be hold the Lord passeth by;" and in his still, small voice comforted, supported, and directed him. I Kings xix. 9.

Micaiah, another man of God, "faw the Lord fitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left." I Kings xxii. 19. Elisha was not only blessed with frequent manifestations of the Lord and his power, but of his heavenly retinue also. He saw in an hour of danger "the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire," ready to protect him; and at his request, the Lord condescended to open his servant's eyes, that his drooping spirits

might revive at the fight. 2 Kings vi. 17.

Eliphaz, one of Job's friends, related to him, that "in thoughts from visions of the night, when deep fleep falleth on men, fear and trembling came upon him. Then a Spirit passed before his face; it stood still, but he could not discern, i. e. clearly distinguish, the form thereof. An image was before his face, and he heard a voice saying, Shall mortal man be more pure than God?" As for Job when he had long contended with his friends, the Lord answered him out of the whirlwind, and manifested himself in a manner, to which that good man was before a stranger. "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore, I abhor my-self, and repent in dust and ashes." Job xxxviii. I.

and xlii. 5. Hence we learn, that nothing but a discovery of the Lord can silence the vain reasonings of self-righteous pleas and unbelieving fears: this alone makes us to lie in deep prostra-

tion at our Maker's feet.

St. John informs us, that Isaiah saw Christ's. glory, and spake of him, when he described the glorious manifestation, in which he received a new feal of pardoning and fanctifying love. "I faw the Lord, fays he, fitting upon his throne, high and lifted up; his train filled the temple. The Seraphim covering their faces with their wings, cried one to another, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hofts. Then faid I, woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips. and I dwell in the midft of people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have feen the King, the Lord of Hosts. Then flew one of the Seraphim, and touching me with a live coal from off the altar. he faid, Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy fin purged." Ifa. vi. 1. &c. Many never witness the forgiveness of their fins, till they see by faith the Lord of hosts, and are melted into repentance. and inflamed with love at the glorious fight. Ifaiah not only beheld Christ's glory, but was bleffed with the clearest views of his fufferi gs. He faw him as "a man of forrows, and acquainted with griefs;" and asked him, "Why he was red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth the wine fat?" These revelations were not only calculated for the good of the church, but also for the establishment of the prophet's faith.

I shall not mention those of Ezekiel; they are so numerous, that a particular account of them would alone sill a letter. I refer you to the book itself. Jeremiah speaking of God's people says, in express terms, The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. xxxi. 3. Daniel

enjoyed the same favour. "He saw the Ancient of Days, and One like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven." We may naturally suppose, that Daniel's three companions Shadrach, Messhach, and Abed-nego, were sensible of their heavenly Deliverer's presence. They were more concerned in the discovery than Nebuchadnezzar, who cried out, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

It would be abfurd to suppose, that the lesser prophets, and other men of God, to whom the word of the Lord came, had no discovery of the Lord himself, the essential Word. If some display of his presence had not attended their every revelation, might they have not said, Thus says my warm imagination,—thus says my enthusiastic brain, as well as, Thus says the Lord?

From the variety and authenticity of these manifestations lest upon facred record, I conclude, that the doctrine I maintain, far from being new and unscriptural, is supported by the experiences of God's children for 3600 years, viz. from the creation of the world, till the close of the Old

Testament.

With respect to what is extraordinary, as to the design, and bare external, as to the circumstances of some of these manifestations, I refer you to the distinctions I made on that subject in my second letter. Should you object, that the contents of this prove only, that God savoured the Patriarchs and Lews with immediate revelations of himself, because they had neither the gospel nor the scriptures: I answer,

1. "The gospel was preached to them, as well as to us. The Patriarchs had tradition, which answered the end of the scriptures in their day. The Jews, in the time of the judges, had not only tradition, but a considerable part of the scriptures."

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tures, even all the writings of Moses. Under the kings, they had the Psalms, Job, Ecclesiastes, the Proverbs, and a thousand and five Songs of Solomon, one of which only has been handed down to our times. They had also the book of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo the seer, which are now lost. These contained the substance of the Bible.

2. When the Lord answered Saul no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams, the reason assigned for it by the Holy Ghost is, not that the canon of scripture was filled, and there was no more occasion for immediate revelations; but that the Lord was departed from him, and was become his enemy.

3. David who had the honour of being a facred writer himself, after his relapse into sin could not be satisfied with the Psalms he had penned down, but mourned, prayed, and watered his bed with his tears, inconsolable till the Lord immediately revealed his pardoning love, and said to his soul, "I

am thy falvation."

4. If because we have the letter of scripture, we must be deprived of all immediate manifestations of Christ and his Spirit, we are great losers by that bleffed book, and we might reasonably fay,—" Lord, bring us back to the dispensation of "Mofes. Thy Jewish servants could formerly " converse with thee face to face, but now we " can know nothing of thee, but by their writ-"ings. They viewed thy glory in various won-"derful appearances, but we are indulged only " with black lines telling us of thy glory. They " had the bright Shekinah, and we have only " obscure descriptions of it. They were blessed " with lively oracles, and we only with a dead " letter. The ark of the covenant went before " them, and struck terror into all their adverright and is.

" faries; but a book, of which our enemies make " daily fport, is the only revelation of thy power; " among us. They made their boast of Usim " and Thummim, and received particular, im-" mediate answers from between the Cherubim; " but we have only general ones, by means of "Hebrew and Greek writings, which many do " not understand. They conversed familiarly with " Moses, their Mediator, with Aaron their high-" priest, and Samuel their prophet; these holy. " men gave them unerring directions in doubtful" " cases; but, alas! the apostles and inspired men " are all dead, and thou Jesus, our Mediator, " Priest, and Prophet, canst not be consulted to " any purpose, for thou manifestests thyself no " more. As for thy facred book, thou knowest " that fometimes the want of money to purchase " it, the want of learning to confult the original, " the want of wisdom to understand the transla-" tion, the want of skill or fight to read it, prevent " our improving it to the best advantage, and " keep some from reaping any benefit from it at " all. O Lord, if, because we have this bleffed " picture of thee, we must have no discovery of " the glorious original, have compassion on us, " take back thy precious book, and impart thy " more precious felf to us, as thou didft to thy " ancient people."

5. St. Paul declares, that though the Mosaic dispensation was glorious, that of Christ exceeds it in glory. But if Christ revealed himself immediately to the Jews, and to Christians only mediately, by the letter of a book, it is plain, the apostle was mistaken; for no one can deny, it is far more glorious to see the light of God's countenance and hear his voice, than merely to

read fomething about them in a book,

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6. That particular manifestations of Christ, far from ceasing with the Jewish, have increased in

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brightness and spirituality under the Christian dispensation, I shall endeavour to prove in my next.

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SIXTH LETTER.

SIR,

A CCORDING to my promise, I shall now prove that the New Testament abounds, as well as the Old, with accounts of particular re-

velations of the Son of God.

Before his birth, he manifested himself to the bleffed virgin, by the overshadowing power of the Holy Ghost. She rejoiced in God her Saviour, and gloried more, in having him revealed as God in her foul, than in finding him conceived as man in her womb. Soon after Joseph her husband, was affured in a heavenly dream, that the child the bore was Emmanuel, God with us. He revealed himself next to Elizabeth. When she heard the falutation of Mary, the was filled with the Holy Ghoff, and made fenfible, that the virgin was the mother of her Lord. So poweaful was this manifestation, that her unborn fon was affected by it .- The babe leaped in her womb for joy, and was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb.

So important is a particular knowledge of Jesus, than an angel directed the shepherds, and a miraculous star the wise men, to the place where he was born: And there the Holy Ghost so revealed him to their hearts, that they hesitated not to worship the seemingly despicable infant, as the majestic God, whom the heaven of heavens can-

not contain.

Simeon, who waited for the consolation of Israel, had it revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's

Christ. The promise was fulfilled; and while his bodily eyes discovered nothing but a poor infant, presented without pomp in the temple, his spiritual eyes perceived him to be the Light of Israel, and the Salvation of God. Nor was this extraordinary favour granted only to Simon, for it is written, all flesh shall see the Salvation of God; and St. Luke informs us, that Anna partook the sight with the old Israelite, gave thanks to her new born Lord, and spake of him to all that waited for redemption in Jerusalem.

When he entered upon his ministry, he first manifested himself to his forerunner. "I knew him not" personally, said John; "but he that sent me to baptize with water, said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he, who baptizes with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bear record, that this is the Son of God, the Lamb,

that taketh away the fins of the world."

Jesus had manifested himself spiritually to Nathaniel under the fig tree; and the honest Israelite, being reminded of that diviue favour, confessed the author of it: "Rabbi, said he, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." Our Lord pleased with his ready confession, promised that he should see greater things, enjoy brighter manifestations, than these; that he should even see heaven open, and the angels of God ascend-

The bare outward fight of our Saviour's person and miracles rather confounded than converted the beholders. What glorious beams of his Godhead pierced thro' the vail of his mean appearance, when, with supreme authority, he turned the buyers and sellers out of the temple: When he entered Jerusalem in triumph, and all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this:" And when he said to those, who apprehended him, "I am He,

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and they went backward, and fell to the ground !" Nevertheless, we do not find, that one person was bleffed with the faving knowledge of him, on any of these solemn occasions. The people of Galifee faw most of him, and yet believed least in him. "What wisdom is this, which is given to this man, faid they, that fuch mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary? and they were offended at him."-Some went even fo far as to afcribe his miracles to a diabolical power, affirming, that he cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. Hence it appears that if he had not in fome degree, revealed himself to the hearts of his disciples, when he said to them, "Follow me," they would never have forfaken all immediately and followed him, He manifelted forth his glory, fays St. John, and his disciples believed on him; and yet when the manifestation was chiefly external, how weak was the effect it produced even upon them? How was our Lord, after all, obliged to upbraid them with their unbelief, their little faith, and, on a particular occasion, with their having no faith? If we know, favingly, that Jefus is God with us,-flesh and blood, i. e. mere man, with all his best powers, hath not revealed this to us, but our Father, who is in heaven. As no man knoweth the Father fave the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him; fo no man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Spirit proceeding from the Father does reveal him. For no man can favingly fay, that Jesus is Jehovah, the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost: "and he, that hath feen me, by this divine revelation, fays Jesus, hath feen the Father also; for I and the Father are one."

Had not our Lord revealed himself in a peculiar manner to sinners, no one would have su pected him to be God manifest in the flesh T

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Till he discovers himself, as he does not unto the world, he hath no form nor comelines, says Isaiah, and when we see him, there is no beauty in him, that we should desire him; we hide as it were our faces from him; he is despised, and we esteem him not. He was obliged to say to the woman of Samaria, "I that speak to thee am He;" and to say it with a power that penetrated her heart, before she could believe with her heart unto righteousness. Then, indeed, divinely wrought upon, she ran, and invited her neighbours to draw living water, out of the well of salvation she had so happily found.

If our Lord had not called Zaccheus inwardly as well as outwardly; if he had not made him come down from the pinnacle of proud nature, as well as from the fycamore tree; if he had not honoured his heart with his spiritual, as he did his house with his bodily presence; the rich publican would never have received him gladly, nor would the Lord have said, "This day is salvation come to thy house, for samuch as thou art a son of faithful

Salvation did not enter into the heart of Simon, who admitted our Lord to his house and table, as well as Zaccheus. The penitent woman, who kissed his feet, and washed them with her tears, obtained the blessing, which the self-righteous Pharisee despised. It was to her contrite spirit, and not to his callous heart, that the Lord revealed himself, as the pardoning God.

The blind man restored to his bodily sight, knew not his heavenly benefactor, till a second and greater miracle was wrought upon the eyes of his blind understanding. When Jesus found him, some time after he was cured, he said to him, "Doest thou believe on the Son of God? He answered, Who is he Lord, that I mighs believe on him?" And Jesus, opening the eye O 4

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of his mind, and manifesting himself to him, as he does not unto the world, said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee," Then, and not till then, he could say from the heart, "Lord I believe, and he worshipped him."

Both the thieves, who were crucified with him, heard his prayers and strong cries; both saw his patience and his meekness, his wounds and his blood. One continued to make sport of his sufferings, as though he had been a worse malesactor than himself; while the other blessed with an internal revelation of his godhead, implored his mercy, trusted him with his soul, and confessed him to be the King of glory, at the very moment, when he hung tortured and dying as the basest of slaves.

St. Peter speaks so highly of the manifestation, with which he and the two sons of Zebedee were savoured on Mount Tabor, that we ought not to pass over it in silence. They saw the kingdom of God coming with power; they beheld the King in his beauty. "His sace did shine like the sun, and his raiment became white as light; a bright cloud over shadowed him, and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Nor did our Lord reveal himself less after his resurrection. Mary sought him at the grave with tears. "As she turned herself, she saw him standing, but knew not that it was Jesus. He said unto her, Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" "She, supposing him to be the gardener, enquired after the object of her love; until Jesus, calling her by her name, manifested himself to her as alive from the dead. Then she cried out Master! and in her transport, would have taken her old place at his feet.

With equal condescension he appeared to Simon, that he might not be swallowed up with over much forrow. True mourners in Sion weep, some for

an absent God, as Mary, others for their sins as Peter; and they will not be comforted, no not by angels; but only by him, who is nigh to all that call upon him, and is health to those that are broken in heart. He that appeared first to weeping Mary, and next to forrowing Peter, will shortly visit them with his salvation. He is already with them, as he was with Mary, though they know it not; and he will soon be in them;

the fure and comfortable hope of glory.

This observation is farther confirmed by the experience of the two disciples, who walked to Emmaus, and were fad. Jefus drew near, joined and comforted them. He made their hearts to burn within them while he talked with them by the way and opened to them the scriptures. But fill their eyes were held, that they should not know him, before they were prepared for the overwhelming favour. And it was not until he fat at meat with them, that their eyes were opened. and they knew him in the breaking of bread. By a fatal mistake, many professors in our day rest fatisfied with what did not fatisfy the two disciples. They understood the scriptures, their hearts burnt with love and joy; Jefus was with them, but they knew him not, until the happy moment, when he fully opened the eye of their faith, and poured the light of his countenance on their ravished spirits. Happy those, who, like them, constrain an unknown Jesus by mighty prayer to tarry with them, until the veil is taken away from their hearts, and they know in whom they have believed.

Frequent were the manifestations of Jesus to his disciples before his assension. An angel appeared to two of the holy mourners, and said to them, "Fear not; for I know, that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is risen from the dead. As they ran with sear and great joy to tell his disciples, Jesus met them saying, All hail! and

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they came, held him by the feet, and worshipped him." The same day in the evening, when the doors were shut where the disciples were affembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst. They were terrified, but with his wonted goodnesshe said, "Peace be unto you!" He shewed them his hands and his feet; ate with them, as he had done of old with Abraham; and, to testify an inward manifestation of the Holy Ghost, which he imparted to them, breathed upon them, as his Spirit breathed upon their minds; and thus he opened their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures. Out of condescension to Thomas he shewed himself to them a fecond time, in the like manner; and a third time at the fea of Tiberias: and afterwards he was feen of above five hundred brethren at once.

You will perhaps fay, Sir, that these manifestations ceased, when Christ was ascended to heaven. This is true with respect to the manifestation of a body of such gross sless and blood, as may be touched with material hands. In this sense believers know Christ after the sless no more. Our Lord, by his gentle reproof to Thomas, discountenanced our looking for carnal manifestations of his person, and I have declared again and again, that they are not what I contend for.

But, that spiritual manifestations of Christ ceased at his ascension, is what I must deny, if I receive the scripture. On the contrary, they became more frequent. "Three thousand were pricked to the heart," on the day of Pentecost, and felt their need of a visit from the heavenly Physician. He then came revealed in the power of his Spirit, with whom he is one. They received the Gift of the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to manifest the Son. For the promise was unto them and their children, and to as many, as the Lord our God shall call: witness the last words

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of Christ in St. Matthew's gospel, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

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Time would fail me to tell of the five thousand converted some days after, of Cornelius and his household, Lydia and her household; in a word, of all who were truly brought to Christ in the first age of Christianity. "The Lord opened their hearts. The Holy Ghost fell upon them; and they walked in his comforts. Christ was evidently set forth crucified before their spiritual eyes. He dwelt in their hearts by faith: they lived not, but Christ lived in them." They agreed in saying, with St. Paul; If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, by whom he is savingly known, he is none of his.

Stephen's experience is alone sufficient to decide the point. When brought before the council, they all faw his face, as it had been the face of an angel. Being full of the Holy Ghoft, he wrought no miracle, he spake no new tongue; but "looked fledfastly up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and faid, Behold, I fee the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of This manifestation was calculated only for the private encouragement and comfort of the pious Deacon. It answered no other end, but to enrage the lews and make them account him a greater blasphemer and a wilder enthusiast, than they did before. Accordingly they cried aloud, stopped their ears, ran upon him, cast him out of the city, and stoned him; while Stephen, under the powerful influence of the manifestation, kneeled down, called upon God, faying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit, and lay not this sin to their charge. Hence we learn, first, that nothing appears fo abfurd and wicked to Pharifces and formalifts, as the doctrine I maintain. They lofe all patience, when they hear that Christ really mani-0 6 felts

fests himself to his servants. No blasphemy like this in the account of those, who are wise, learned and prudent in their own eyes. Secondly, that the most exalted saints need a fresh manifestation of the glory, love, and presence of Christ, that they may depart this life in the triumph of faith.

If you object, that Stephen was thus favoured, because he was about to suffer for Christ, and, that it would be great prefumption to expect the like support, I reply, in the five following Observations. (1) We are called to suffer for Christ, as well as Stephen, though perhaps not in the fame manner and degree. (2) We often need as much support from Christ, to stand against the children of men that are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongues a sharp sword; and to quench the fiery darts of the devil, as the martyr did to stand a shower of stones. (3) It is perhaps as hard to be racked with the gout, or to burn feveral days in a fever on a fick bed, as you or I may be forced to do, as to be for a few minutes with Shadrach and his companions in a burning furnace, or to feel for a fleeting moment the anguish of bruised flesh and a fractured skull, with our triumphant martyr. No one knows, what pangs of body and agonies of foul may accompany him thro' the valley of the shadow of death. If our Lord himself was not above being strengthened by an angel that appeared to him from heaven, furely it is no enthusiasm to say, that such feeble creatures as we are, fland in need of a divine manifestation, to enable us to fight our last battle manfully, and to come off more than conquerors. (4) We betray unbelief, if we suppose, that Christ cannot do for us what he did for Stephen; and we betray our presumption, if we fay, we want not the affistance, which this bold champion flood in need of. (5) The language of our Church is far different: "Grant" says she,

in her collect for that Saint's day, "O Lord, tha in all our fufferings here on earth for the testimony of thy truth, we may stedfastly look up to heaven, and, by faith, behold the glory that shall be revealed; and, being filled with the Holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our perfecutors, by the example of thy first martyr, St. Stephen, who prayed for his murderers, to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standess at the right hand of God, to succour all those who suffer for thee."

You see, Sir, that I have the suffrage of the Church of England; and yours too, if you do not renounce our excellent liturgy: so that, If I am an enthusiast for expecting to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and by faith to behold the glory, that shall be revealed, as well as St. Stephen, I am countenanced by a multitude of the best and greatest men in the world.

But suppose you reject the testimony of St. Stephen, and of all our Clergy (when in the desk) touching the reality and the necessity too of our Lord's manifesting himself on earth, after his afcension into heaven, receive at least that of St. Luke and St. Paul. They both inform us, that "as Saul of Tarfus went to Damascus, the Lord even. Tefus, appeared to him in the way. Suddenly there shone a light from heaven above the brightness of the fun, so that he fell to the earth, and heard a voice, faying, Saul, Saul, why perfecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord faid, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." So powerful was the effect of this manifestation of Christ, that the sinner was turned into a saint, and the fierce, blaspheming persecutor into a weeping, praying apostle.

Methinks I hear you say, True, into an apostle; but are we called to be apostles? No, Sir,

but we are called to be Christians-to be converted from fin to holinefs, and from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son. St. Paul's call to the apostleship is nothing to his being made a child of God. Judas was a Christian by profession, an apostle by call, and a devil by nature. And what is Judas in his own place to the meanest of God's children?-to poor Lazarus in Abraham's bosom? All, who go to heaven, are first turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. This turning fometimes begins by a manifestation of Christ; witness the authentic account of Colonel Gardiner's conversion, published by his judicious friend Dr. Doddridge; and the more authentic one of our apostle's conversion, recorded three times by St. Luke. And I dare advance upon the authority of one greater than Luke, that no one's conversion ever was completed without the revelation of the Son of God to his heart. "I am the way and the door, fays Jesus, no man cometh to the Father but by me." " Look unto me, and be ye faved all ye ends of the earth." Our looking to him for falvation would be to as little purpose, was he not to manifest himself to us, as our looking towards. the east for light, if the fun were not to rise upon

The revelation of Christ, productive of St. Paul's conversion, was not the only one with which the Apostle was favoured. "At Corinth the Lord encouraged and spake to him in the night by a vision. Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall hurt thee." On another occasion, to wean him more from earth, Christ savoured him with the nearest views of heaven. "I knew a man in Christ, says he, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, who was caught up into the third heaven, into paradise, and heard words, which

which it is not possible for man to utter." And he informs us farther, that lest he should be exalted above measure thro' the abundance of the revelations, a messenger of Satan was suffered to busset him. When he had been brought before the Sanhedrim for preaching the gospel, St. Luke informs us, that "the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, be of good cheer Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." The Ship, in which he sailed, being endangered by a storm, There stood by him "the angel of God, whose he was, and whom he served, saying, Fear not Paul, &c."

St. Paul was not the only one, to whom Christ manifested himself in this familiar manner. Ananias of Damascus, was neither an apostle, nor a deacon; nevertheless, to him "faid the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here Lord; and the Lord said, Arise, and go into the street, which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus; for behold he prayeth." In like manner Philip was directed to go near and join himself to the

Eunuch's chariot. And St. Peter being informed that three men fought him, "Arife, faid the Lord,

and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have fent them."

Whether we place these manisestations in the class of the extraordinary, or of the mixt ones, we equally learn from them, (1st) That the Lord Jesus revealed himself as much after his ascension as he did before. (2dly) That if he does it to send his servants with a gospel message to particular persons, he will do it much more to make that message effectual, and to bring salvation to those who wait for him.

As for the revelations of Christ to St. John, they were so many, that the last book of the New Testament Testament is called the Revelation, as containing chiefly an account of them. " I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, fays the apostle; and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, faying, I am the first and the last. I turned to see the voice, that spake with me, and I saw one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt with a golden girdle. His head and hair were as white as snow, and his eyes as a flame of fire, his feet like unto fine brass burning in a furnace, his voice as the sound of many waters, and his countenance as the funshining in his strength. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead; and he laid his hand upon me, faying, Fear not, I am the first and the last. I am he, that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and death. Write the things, which are and shall be." One of the things, which our Lord commanded John to write, is a most glorious promile, that he stands at the door of the human heart ready to manifest himself even to poor lukewarm Laodiceans; and that, if any man hear his voice and open,-if they are made conscious of their need of him, fo as to open their hearts by the prayer of faith, he will come in, and feast them with his gracious presence, and the delicious fruits of his bleffed Spirit. Therefore the most extraordinary of all the revelations, that of St. John in Patmos, not only shews, that the manifestation of Christ run parallel to the canon of scripture, but also gives a particular fanction to the ordinary revelations of him, for which I contend.

Having thus led you from Genesis to Revelation, I conclude by two inferences, which appear to me undeniable. The first, that it is evident our Lord, before his incarnation, during his stay on earth, and after his ascension into heaven, hath

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been pleased, in a variety of manners, to manifest himself to the children of men, both for the benefit of the Church in general, and for the conversion of sinners and the establishment of saints in particular. Secondly, that the doctrine, I maintain, is as old as Adam, as modern as St. John, the last of the inspired writers, and as scriptural as the Old and New Testament, which is what I wanted to demonstrate.

I am, Sir, &c.

FRAGMENTS.

ON SERIOUSNESS.

levity. Seriousness consists in the matter of what is spoken, in the manner of speaking, in dignity of behaviour, and in weighty, not trifling actions. Some people are serious by nature, some by policy, and for selfish ends, and some by grace, and from a sense of duty.

Jesting and raillery, lightness of behaviour, useless occupations, joy without trembling and awe of God, an affectation of vivacity and sprightliness, are all contrary to the Spirit of God. A fool laughs laud, saith Solomon: but a wise man scarce

smiles a litt c.

Levity is contrary to contrition and felf knowledge—to watching and prayer—frequently to charity—and to common fense, when death is at our heels.

Levity is also destructive of all devotion—in our own heart—and in that of others, by unfitting the company of receiving good, and bringing a suspicion of hypocrify upon all.

Seriousness is useful to prevent the foregoing

miscarriages, to keep grace,—to recommend piety and a sense of God's presence—to leave room for the Spirit to work—and to check levity and sin in others.

And have we not motives sufficient to seriousness? Are we not priests and kings to God—temples of the Holy Ghost? Are we not walking in the presence of God—on the verge of the grave and in fight of eternity?

All who walk with God are ferious, taking their Lord for their example, and walking by feripture

precepts and warnings.

"But, are we to renounce innocent mirth?"
Our fouls are diseased. "Are we to be dull and melancholy?" Seriousness and solid happiness are inseparable. "Is there not a time for all things?"
There is no time for sin and folly.

ON PLEASURE.

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YING to pleasure, even the most innocent, we shall live to God. Of pleasures there are four forts. Sensual pleasures—of the eye, ear, taste, smell, ease, indulgence, &c. Pleasures of the heart—attachments, entanglements, creature love, unmortisted friendships. Pleasures of the mind—curious books, deep researches, speculations, hankerings after news—wit—fine language. The Pleasures of the imagination—schemes, fancies, suppositions.

God requires, that we should deny ourselves in all these respects, because (1.) God will have the heart, which he cannot have, if pleasure hath it: and God is a jealous God. (2.) There is no solid union with God, until, in a christian sense, we are dead to creature comforts.—Pleasure is the Gordian knot. (3.) God is purity—hankering after pleasure is the cause of almost all our sins—the bait of temptation.(4.) God calls us to shew

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our faith and love by a spirit of sacrifice.—Pleafure, is Isaac. 5. Denying ourselves, hating our
life, dying daily, crucifying the slesh, putting off
the old man, are gospel precepts,—so is cutting
off the right hand, plucking out the right eye,
and forsaking all to follow Christ. 6. God makes
no exceptions. All the offending members must
be cut off, every leak must be stopt; or the corrupting pleasure spared gets more ascendant.
7. Pleasures render the soul incapable of the
operations of the Spirit, and obstruct divine consolutions.

Now nature is all for pleasure, and lives upon sensuality. The senses, heart, mind, and imagination, pursue always objects that may gratify them. We love pleasure so as to deprive ourselves of every thing to enjoy it, in some kind or other; and we undergo hardships to procure it. Nature frets horribly, if disappointed in this savourite pursuit; and yet if nature is pampered, grace must be starved.

Earthly pleasures are of a corrupting nature; for example that of taste, if indulged, spreads through, corrupts, and dissipates all the powers of the soul and body. It is so much the more dangerous, as it hides itself under a mask of necessity, or colour of lawfulness; and does all the mischief of a concealed traitor. It betrays with a kiss, poisons with honey, wounds in its smiles,

and kills while it promises happiness.

Indulgence enervates and renders us incapable of suffering from God, men, devils, or self; and stands continually in the way of our doing, as well as suffering the will of God. It is much easier, therefore, to fly from pleasure, than to remain within due bounds in its enjoyments. The greatest saints find nothing is so difficult, nothing makes them tremble so, as the use of pleasure; for it requires the strictest watchfulness and the

most vigorous attention. He must walk steadily, who can walk safely, on the brink of a precipice.

The absolute necessity of dying to pleasure will appear from the following considerations. The earthly senses, must be spiritualized; the sensual heart, purified; the wandering mind fixed; the

foolish imagination made sober.

Worldly pleasures are all little, low and tranfitory, and a hinderance to our chief good. Much moderation, however, is to be used in the choice and degree of our mortifications. Thro' pride, nature often prompts us to great extremes, which hurt the body, and sometimes lead the mind into sourness and obstinacy. But to know, and walk in the right path of self-denial, we have need of much recollection.

ON HYPOCRISY.

ANY pretend to a share of the holy child, but we want all the wisdom of the true Solomon to know the mother from the harlet. An hypocrite hides wickedness under a cloak of goodness,—clouds without rain, wells without water, trees without fruits, the ape of piety, the mask of sin, glorious without,—carron within. They do not put off, but throw a cloak over it.

SATAN AN ARCH-HYPOCRITE.

Having apostatized from God himself, he endeavoured to vent his malice and envy on God's favourite, man. He disguised himself as a serpent, shewed much love and friendship, and by that appearance deceived Eve. Tho' God has prepared an antidote, yet he goes about murdering the children of men with increasing crast, (for he is now the old serpent) he is still opposing Christ, picking up the seed of the word, hindering the sowers,—sowing tares. He is the strong

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man, armed with the force of an angel, the subtlety of a fallen angel, able to infinuate himself into souls, as into serpents. His baits are pleafure for the sensual, wealth for the muckworm, honour for the ambitious, and science for the curious: In each he transforms himself as an angel of light, gilding all with heavenly appearances,—but his light is darkness, and how great is that darkness!

He works admirably on predifpositions. 1. On ignorance of evil, or forgetfulness of the sword of the spirit. He finds us blind, or blinds our eyes to make us turn the better, in his mill. 2. On fecurity. He puts far from us the thoughts of death,-" Ye shall not furely die." 3. On idlenefs. When David was idle at home, and Joab in the field, fatan took that opportunity to draw him into the fnare of luft. 4. On unreasonable scruples of conscience, -discouragement, -extremes. If he cannot put out the fire of zeal, he will make it break out at the chimney, and drive fasting into starving. 5. He suits his temptations to the subjects, drives the nail that will go, and causes the stream of natural propensities to flow. He tempts not, in general, the old to pleafure, nor the young to covetousness, nor the sick to drunkenness, but to impatience.

THE MORAL HYPOCRITE.

Many mistake nature for grace, and so rest short of a true change: Strong sense, keen wit, lively parts, and a good natural temper puss up many. The tempering makes a vast difference in many blades, all made of the same metal; some of which will bend before they break, others break before they bend. Good nature, without grace, maketh a fairer shew than grace with an evil nature.—A cur, outruns a greyhound with a clog.

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The hypocrite derives his honour from his birth; the child of God from his new birth. The hypocrite hath his perfections from the body,—from his complexion and conflitution, which are not praife worthy; but the Christian hath them from his better part, the foul. A warm temper hath often the appearance of zeal, a cooler of patience, melancholy of contemplation, lively blood and strong spirits, of spiritual joy.

The hypocrite ferves God with what costs him nothing, only going down the stream; but the Christian works with strife and industry, wrestleth,

and keeps his body under.

The hypocrite is disposed to some virtues, and refrains from those vices, that are contrary to his taste and humour, as an elephant abhors a mouse; but the Christian shuts every door against sin, and is thoroughly furnished to every good work.

The hypocrite puts reason in the place of religion; on the contrary, the Christian brings reaton under the command of religion; his understanding bows to faith, and his free-will to God's

free grace.

The hypocrite derives his virtues from himself, spider like. "Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man," Jer. xvii. 5. The Christian hath his virtues from above:—the one is like marshy ground, the other is watered from heaven. Again, the hypocrite curses himself by giving to reason the command of appetite, not knowing, that his reason is crooked; but the Christian puts all under the strict rule of grace;—Grace is Sarah, Reason Agar. The one talks of right reason, the other reclisheth it.

The hypocrite puts honesty in the place of piety; but the Christian is honest and kind from a principle of genuine piety. There was a difference between Alexander and David pouring out water,—

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the one before his foldiers, the other before the Lord.

He hath for virtues only shining vices,—virtues proceeding from unfanctified reason, and spoiled by the intention: Thus, a covetous, indolent man avoids, and hates law-suits; he is sober and temperate, thro' love of money, or of health and reputation; he is diligent and industrious to compass profit. But the Christian hath the truth, if he wants the perfection of virtue; the one shines as rotten wood, the other as gold in the ore.

The hypocite cries up virtue, and exclaims against vice, rather by speech than practice; but the king's daughter is glorious within: The one

speaks, the other lives great things.

The hypocrite keeps himself from gross sins, but harbours spiritual corruptions. Does he subdue his passions? they are in the way of his glory and quiet. Does he do good? it is to be more in love with himself. The Christian cleanseth himself from all spiritual vices: The one is settled on the less of self-love, the other is emptied of self and silled with Christ.

The hypocrite compares himself with the child of God when under disadvantages; as for example, when he is fallen, or overtaken in an infirmity: but the whitest devil shall not stand in the judgment with the most tawny child of God. The meteor may blaze, but the star standeth.

THE HEARING HYPOCRITE.

The hearing hypocrite hears Christ's word without benefit; he assembles with the pious, whom he deceives, as he hopes to deceive Christ. Luke. xiii. 26. He goes to meet Christ, not as the bride, but only as the bride's triend. He is the stony ground: he is sermon proof, repels conviction, takes nothing to himself, or shakes it off, as sheep do the rain. He hath the forehead of the whore, Jer. iii. 3. and refuses to be ashamed. Christ condemns him, both as a worker of iniquity, and a builder on the fand. The Christian hears, so that his profiting appears unto all men; he hears Christ himself through the minister; and the word is able to save his soul, as a savour of life unto life: Nor is he a forgetful hearer, but a

doer, of the word

The hypocrite will hear only fuch ministers as fuit his humour,—Balaam suits Blak, a lying prophet Ahab. He will neglect or slight others. The Christian hears God's voice through every messenger of his, the plainer the message the better he receives the messenger,—as "an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." Gal. iv. 14. He Judges not of the word by the preacher, but of the preacher by the word. He, like Jehosaphat, will hear Micaiah preach, rather than the 400 prophets of Baal.

The hypocrite hears in hopes of hearing something new, therefore when he has heard a few times, he grows weary, and longs for a new preacher. An unfanctified heart, like a sick stomach, loathes its daily bread; but the Christian is never tired of the sincere milk of the word; he desires no new wine; he likes manna after forty years,—" Evermore give us this bread."

The hypocrite hearkens more after eloquence than substance. He likes Apollos, not Christ's messenger; he hears not for life; he sports with the infirmities of Sampson,—but death is at the door. The Christian looks most to the power of the word; he comes not as to a show, but to the bar, weighs the matter rather than the manner, and regards the message more than the messenger. The one falls down before man, the other before God.

He will not hear all: comforts, promises, and general truths he loves; the doctrine of the cross he hates. A foil, a wooden sword, that draws no blood, suits him. The Christian hears all God's word, loves to be smitten, does not say, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" but, "Search me, and try my heart."

The hypocrite looks on the word as a story or a landscape, he loves to hear of Christ's miracles, of the prodigal son, &c; but draws a curtain before his own picture. The Christian looks on the word as a glass to see himself. The one uses the word as children their books, looking more at the pictures than the lesson, the other sees himself and

improves.

He hears, without preparing his heart to hear; he minds his outward more than his inward man; he uses no exercise to get an appetite; it is enough if he hears, tho' he digests nothing. He sows among thorns, having never ploughed them up, and they choke all. The Christian looks to his feet, comes hungry to the house of God, longing to be fed, and is not willing to go without his portion.

He hears only for the present time, as he would hear a concert of musick; the Christian hears both for the time present, and to come; he studies what he hears, and to what end, that he may turn it into practice. He remembers that word, "Take

heed, how you hear."

He proposes to himself some carnal end, if any at all,—as to be noticed for his diligence,—to be reputed a good churchman,—to sulfil his task of hearing,—perhaps to caval and find fault,—to make amends for not doing,—to please a friend. Festus thus pleased Agrippa, and Ahab heard Micaiah for Jehosophat's sake: But the Christian hears for his own and others edification.

If the hypocrite is of the fecond class of hearers, he fometimes pretends to practice, as an excuse for Vol. IX.

not hearing. "I have," fays he, "enough in one fermon to practife all the week." The Christian makes hearing and practice to go hand in hand; he will redeem time for hearing from recreation and sleep; his hearing is a spur to his practice. He does not pretend practice as a hinderance to his hearing, like Judas, who, out of pretended regard to the poor, sought to rob Christ of his due.

Sometimes he trembleth under the word, but yet he shifts it off, before it has taken hold of his heart: As a tree shaken by the wind takes deeper root, so is he more rooted in his sins. Felix's fearfulness surprizeth the hypocrite before he is aware; he is ashamed of himself, angry at the preacher, and, Cain like, he runs from God, instead of going to him. But the Christian trembles at the word as afraid to sin against it. One is Pharaoh, the other Josiah.

He is a feeming friend, but a fecret foe, to the gospel. When the word is a hammer, he is an anvil; when it is a fire, he is clay. But the Christian is both reconciled to, and transformed into the word; receiving it as the word of God in the love thereof. If the word be a nail, it nails him to Christ; if a sword, he loves to be cut and dissected; if a fire, he is like water, or as gold. The one kisses the word, like Judas; the other embraces it, as Joseph did Benjamin.

THE PRAYING HYPOCRITE.

The praying hypocrite prays with his tongue, but not with his heart; The heart of the Chrif-

tian goes first in prayer.

The hypocrite asks according to his wishes, looking no farther, like Israel for quails, Balaam for leave to curse God's people, Rachel for children:
But the Christian like Hannah, who prayed hard and submitted all to God.

He is wavering, and double-minded,— "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" "Will he hear and answer?" The Christian asketh in faith, nothing wavering; as Moses at the Red Sea,

while Ifrael cried and expected death.

The hypocrite is sometimes presumptuous also,—
"Wherefore have I fasted, and thou seest not?"
The Christian always comes as a poor beggar, crying with the Centurion, "I am not worthy."
He quarrelleth with God, if not answered,—
"This evil is of the Lord:" But the Christian waiteth patiently, saying, "It is the Lord, let him do as he pleaseth."

He prays without repentance, regarding iniquity in his heart; but the Christian confesses and for-

fakes his fin.

The hypocrite prays without faith, without expecting an answer; therefore he often cuts short his prayer, especially in secret. The Christian pours out his soul in prayer;—gives good measure, pressed down, running over, being assured, that word standeth fast, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall my heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask it?"

At other times the hypocrite will exceed meafure,—but only in company, like the Ave Maria's of the Papists. The true Christian measures his prayers by his affections, and by works of charity

and duty.

The hypocrite prays in adversity, not in prosperity; he comes like the leper, or beaten child. The Christian, as the loving son, prays in prosperity, without the compulsion of the rod. Or, perhaps, he will pray in prosperity, but in adversity his heart sinks, like Nabal's: he murmurs, complains, and cries out, "Why doth the Lord do thus unto me?" The Christian remembers those words of St. James, "Is any afflicted, let him P 2

pray." The one, as a bastard, runs away; the other kisses the rod, and sees every thing as the answer of prayer, submitting himself wholly to the will of God.

THE PREACHING HYPOCRITE WORSE THAN ALL.

Admitted of men, not called of God, he preaches Christ, but not for Christ. Put me, saith he, into the priest's office, that I may eat a morfel of bread. He is, perhaps, a preacher of righteousness, but a worker of iniquity. But the true Christian preacher, only spends and is spent upon Christ and his interest; he is careful not only of his gifts, but of his grace; not only to be sent of men, but of God. The one preaches himself and for himself, the other preaches Christ and for Christ.

The hypocrite is ambitions to shew his learning,—to be admired rather than to be useful: Not so St. Paul. 1 Cor. ii. A scribe well instructed, bringing out of his own treasures things new and old.

He brings in learning, but not divine learning! His artificial fire hath no warmth in it. But the Christian minister, tho' perhaps learned in Egyptian wisdom as Moses, and in Greek literature as St. Paul, who quoted Aratus to the Athenians, Acts xvii. 28, Menander to the Corinthians, I Cor. xv. 33, Epimenides to Titus, Titus i. 12. never uses it but as the Agar of Sarah; Christ crucified being his chief knowledge.

The hypocrite uses divine learning, to human, carnal ends,—to get preferment or fame, to support opinions or parties. The minister of Christ handles not the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth. 2 Cor. iv. 2. He glorieth not in his preaching, a necessity being laid upon

him by Christ.

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The hypocrite chuses subjects on which he may shine and please: The other, those which may awaken and edify,—disclaiming men-pleasing.—The one shoots over the heads, the other aims at the hearts of his hearers, suiting himself to the

meanest capacity.

He puts on a face of zeal, without zeal, and, trying to move others, is himself unmoved. He cannot fay, with Christ, The xeal of thine house hath eaten me up: His zeal is an ignis-fatuus, or perhaps a heathenish fire lighted at Seneca's torch; -not a burning, as well as a shining light. He may have some feelings, but they are over with his fermon or prayer; some warmth for the Church, as Jehu, because it is his party. But the Christian minister hath more zeal in his bosom than on his tongue. Elijah-like, the word of the Lord is as a fire in his bones. His foul mourns in fecret places for the fins he reproves openly, Jer. xiii. 17. He can put probatum est, to what he preaches; and his zeal hath a very large measure of gospel love; -it saves others, while it consumes himself.

The hypocrite is, perhaps, strict in his rules, loose in his practice, binding heavy burdens, that he toucheth not himself. He is like a finger post, which shews the way, but never walks in it: he promises liberty, while he is himself the slave of sin. The true preacher is afraid to preach what he practises not;—he lives his sermons over. As a brave captain, he saith, "Follow me;" he aims at Thummim as well as Urim, perfection as well

as light.

The one makes the way to heaven as broad as he can, at least to himself, and oft times allows things to others to screen himself. The other makes the way to heaven narrower to himself than to his hearers, and never gives up the least of the word lest his own foot should be pinched.

ON

ON LUKEWARMNESS.

THE lukewarm are of two forts. The first will fpeak against enormities, but plead for little fins ;-will go to church and facrament, but also to plays, races and shews; -will read the Bible and also romances and trifling books. They will have family prayer, at least on Sundays, but after it unprofitable talk, evil fpeaking, and worldly converfation. They plead for the church, yet leave it for a card party, a pot companion, or the fire-fide. They think they are almost good enough, and they, who aim at being better, are (to be fure) hypocrites. They are under the power of anger, evil defire and anxious care; but suppose all men are the fame; and talk much of being faved by true repentance and doing all they can. They under-value Christ, extol morality and good works, and do next to none. They plead for old customs: they will do as their fathers did, tho' ever fo contrary to the word of God; and whatever hath not custom to plead for it, tho' ever so much recommended in scripture, is accounted by them a herefy. They are greatly afraid of being too good, and of making too much ado about their fouls and eternity, they will be fober, but not enthusiasts. The scriptures they quote most, and understand least, are, Be not righteous over much :- God's mercies are over all his works :- There is a time for all things, &c. They call themselves by the name of Christ, but worship Baal.

The second fort of lukewarm persons, assent to the whole Bible, talk of repentance, faith, and the new birth, commend holiness, plead for religion, use the outward means, and profess to be and to do more than others. But they yield to carelessness, self indulgence, fear of man, dread of reproach, and of loss, hatred of the cross, love of ease, and the false pleasures of a vain imagination. These say, do, and really suffer many things; but rest short of the true change of heart, the one thing needful being still lacking. They are as the soolish virgins, without oil,—as the man

not having on the wedding garment.

Of these the Lord hath said, He will spew them out of his mouth: But, Why fo severe a sentence? Because, (1) Christ will have a man hearty and true to his principles; he looks for truth in the inward parts. As a confishent character he commended even the unjust steward. (2) Religion admits of no lukewarmness, and it is by men of this character, that his Name is blasphemed. (3) A bad servant is worse than a careless neighbour; and a traitor, in the guise of a friend, is more hateful and more dangerous than an open enemy: Judas was more infamous than Pilate. (4) The cold have nothing to trust to, and harlots and publicans enter into the kingdom of heaven, before moral or evangelical pharisees, who, in different degrees, know their Master's will, and do it not: They shall be beaten with many stripes.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.

Isa. xxvi. 3.

THE very centre of Christian religion is union with Christ, and the receiving him as our all; in other words, called faith, or a staying our minds on him. To the doing this, there are many hinderances, but the two greatest and most general ones are,

First, the want of self-knowledge; this keeps ninety-nine out of one hundred, from Christ. They know not, or rather feel not, that they are blind, naked, leprous, helpless, and condemned; that all their works can make no atonement, and

P 4

that nothing they can do will fit them for heaven. When this is truly known, the first grand hinderance to our union with Christ is removed.

The fecond is, The want of understanding the gofpel of Christ: the want of seeing therein the firm foundation given us for this pure and fimple faith, the only folid ground of staying our fouls on God. We must remember, that the gospel is good news, and not be flow of heart to believe it. Christ receiveth finners, he undertaketh their whole concern; he giveth not only repentance, but remission of fins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. He creates them anew.—his love first makes the bride, and then he delights in her. The want of viewing Christ in this light, as the Author and Finisher of our salvation, hinders the poor humble penitent from casting himself wholly on the Lord, altho' he hath faid, Cast thy burden on the

Lord, and he shall sustain thee.

I do not mention fin, for fin is the very thing, which renders man the object of Christ's pity. Our fins will never turn away the heart of Christ from us, for they brought him down from heaven to die in our place: and the reason, why iniquity separates between God and our fouls, is because it turns our eyes from him, and shuts up in us the capacity of receiving those beams of love, which are ever descending upon and offering themselves to us. But fin fincerely lamented, and brought by a constant act of faith and Prayer before the Lord, shall foon be confumed, as the thorns laid close to a fire; only let us abide thus waiting, and the Lord will pass through them and burn them up together.

When the foul feels its own helplessness, and receives the glad tidings of the gospel, it ventures upon Christ; and though the world, the flesh,

and the devil pursue, so that the soul seems often to be on the brink of ruin, it has still only to listen to the gospel, and venture on Christ, as a drowning man on a single plank, with, "I can but perish," remembering these words, Thou wilt keep him in terfest peace, whose mind is stayed on thee,

because he trusteth in thee.

The consequences of thus trusting is, that God keeps the soul from its threefold enemy;—defends it in temptation, in persecution, in heaviness. Through all, it finds power to repose itself on Christ,—to say "God shall chuse my inheritance for me." Here the Christian sinds peace with God, peace with himself, and peace with all around him;—the peace of pardon, the peace of holiness; for both are obtained by staying the mind on Christ. He walks in the perpetual recollection of a present God, and is not disturbed by any thing. If he feels sin, he carries it to the Saviour, and if in heaviness, thro manifold temptations, he still holds sast his considence:—he is above the region of clouds.

The careless sinner is not to be exhorted to trust in Christ; it would be to cast pearls before swine. Before an act of faith, there must be an act of felf-despair; before filling, there must be emptiness. Is this thy character? Then suffer me to take away thy false props. Upon what dost thou stay thy soul? Thy honesty, morality, humility, doing good, using the means, business, friends, confused thoughts of God's mercy? This will never do. Thou must be brought to say, "What shall I do to be saved?" Without trembling at God's word, thou canst not receive Christ. No-

thing short of love will do.

The penitent needs, and bleffed be God, has every encouragement. You have nothing but fin; —it is time you should understand the gospel. You see yourself sinking,—Christ is with you.

P 5 You

You despair of yourself,—hope in Christ. You are overcome,—Christ conquers. Self-condemned,—he absolves. Why do not you believe? Is not the messenger, the word, the Spirit of God, sufficient? You want a joy unspeakable,—the way to it is by thus waiting patiently upon God. Look to Jesus: He speaks peace; abide looking, and your peace shall flow as a river.

Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said unto them. Is it true,
O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye
ferve my Gods, nor worship the golden image that
I have set up? Dan iii. 14.*

N this chapter we have an account of those worthies, who quenched the violence of the fire. Observe, I. The dedication of the image. II. The three children accused and arraigned. III. Soothed and threatened, but preferring death to sin, God's law to the king's, faith to honour and profit. IV. Nebuchadnezzar's anger, their punishment, and deliverance. V. The effect it had on the king.

This account may be applied to the trials of God's children in all ages. The God of this world fets up, in opposition to the gospel, three images: the first, a golden image, profit; the second, an airy image, honour; the third, a beauti-

ful, alluring image, pleasure.

The first, profit, is worshipped by setting our affections upon it, by making it the prime, if not sole object of our thoughts, and lord even of our Sabbaths. We bow down to this golden image, by unjust dealing, running in debt without taking care to discharge it, chusing rather to wound our conscience than our pocket; by countenancing or suffering evil for filthy lucre's sake, forgetting that, The love of money, is the root of all evil."

^{*} Preached at Madeley on the Wake Sunday, A. D. 1763.

The second, honour, is worshipped, when we desire the applause of men, or shrink from duty

for fear of their rage or contempt.

The third, pleasure, when we indulge the flesh, by excessive eating and drinking, by uncleanness, vain shews, and heathenish sports; when we delight ourselves in dress, furniture, our persons, &c. In a word, when we do not fanctify the enjoyment of the creature, by the Word of God

and prayer.

As the people of God will not bow down to this threefold image, they are accused, threatened and ridiculed. Their duty, under such circumstances, is to bear their testimony against this idolatrous worship of the god of this world, to possess their souls in patience, to believe in the Lord's will and power to save them; not to comply by halves, or compromise the matter with the world; but to be ready to offer up their lives, and leave the event to God, in a steady purpose not to offend him.

All came to the dedication, even from afar:—but how many flay from the house of God, tho' at the door! All bowed down but three:—How many are now going to turn their backs on the Lord's Table!

From the dedication of our Church, from days fet apart to be kept holy, fatan takes occasion to enforce the worship of his threefold image. Now remember the duty of God's people, and quit yourselves like men. Some petty Nebuchadnezzars have sent to gather together, not princes, but drunken men; and have set up, not a golden image, no nor a golden calf, but a living bull. O ye, that sear God, be not asraid of their terror, be not allured by their musick; confess the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; and pray that these offenders may, with Nebuchadnezzar of old, resolve, not only to do nothing against, but P 6

not even " to speak amis of the God of Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abed-nego."

To you, my brethren, who worship the image, what shall I say? Shall Nebuchadnezzar rise up in Judgement against you? He blessed the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; will you curse him? For inasmuch as you do it to one of his followers, you do it unto him. Nebuchadnezzar made a decree, that whoever should speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, should be cut in pieces, and their houses made a dunghill; and will you cut in pieces, with your tongues, or turn into a dunghill, by riot and mobbing, the houses of those, who fear and love the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego? No other God can deliver after this sort, said the heathen; and give me leave to add, no other God can punish after this sort.

The King of kings hath anointed Jesus! He is lifted up on the crofs;—upon a throne of Glory. The decree is gone forth, " At the name of Jesus every knee must bow. All tongues, nations, languages, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, angels, archangels, and saints, above and below, "all must fall down." In heaven, trumpets, thunders, lightenings, voices: - On earth, the terrors of Sinai, all fay, "Kiss the Son." He is not a dead image, but the living God .- He comes: - The trump of God may found to-day. The burning furnace of his indignation is heated, and eternity is the duration of their torments, whose smoke ascendeth for ever and ever.—O let him bless you now in turning every one of you from his iniquities, and you shall keep the feast in

heaven.

Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground. Luke xxii. 44.

ANY defire to know, what passes in the heart of great men, when under afflicting circumstances, or engaged in some great undertaking. Behold the most sublime scene of suffering held out to us in the word of God: Here are laid open the last, the dying thoughts and cruel sufferings of the Saviour of mankind: Here is a scene, in which we are all most deeply interested. Let us look into,

I. The agony of our Saviour. II. What he did in his agony. III. The amazing confequences

of that agony.

The agony of our Lord was a conflict,—a violent struggle,—a grappling and wrestling with the deepest horror,—the agitation of a breast penetrated with the greatest sense of fear and amazement.—" He was heard in that he feared."

The cause of his agony was, 1. The powers of darkness, legions of devils, who poured on his devoted head their utmost rage and malice. Every wound, which fin had given, and the devil had power to inflict, the pure and naked bosom of Jesus opened itself to receive. The prince of darkness, whose chain was let loose for the purpose, now ruled his hour, and, to appearance, triumphed over the Prince of Life. 2. The feeling of the weight of the wrath of God (and who knoweth the power of his wrath?) as kindled against fin,-the terrors of the Lord,-the cup of trembling, the withdrawing of God's comfortable presence. 3. The fear of his farther sufferings,a violent, dreadful, and approaching death. 4. The atoning for our coldness, and the painful forefight, with how much truth, those words of the

the prophet might be applied to many, " Is it

nothing to you, all ye, that pass by?"

During his agony he prayed more earnestly. He prayed earnestly before, but now more earnestly; before, he kneeled; but now, he threw himself prostrate on the earth. He prayed aloud with strong cries and tears.* He was in an agony, every power of soul and body being stretched to the utmost.—Those, who never, or seldom pray, are strangers to spiritual conslicts.

The greatness of his agony, and intenseness of his prayer caused that amazing circumstance of his sweat being, as it were great drops of blood. Amazing! Because, it was a cold damp night,—he lay on the dewy ground;—it was so profuse as to run down in great drops to the ground;—the sweat was mixed with blood, bursting out of the

capillary veffels thro' the open pores.

Observe, Adam sinned in a garden; in a garden Christ expiates sin. Before death, "In the sweat of thy brow, &c. t before death Christ sweat, and with all his body laboured. "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth;" Christ sweat blood, strong sign of pain. "Cursed is the ground," &c. Christ, when made sin and a curse, lies prostrate on the ground, and bedews it with blood.

Brethren, we must all be brought to an agony; yea, we must be *Crucified* with Christ, if we would reign with him. Beware then of vilifying the spiritual agonies of the children of God, by

calling them mad fits.

You who, in agony, have brought forth children, or struggled under the load of excessive drinking, or laboured for life when in danger,

struggle and agonize now for your fouls.

Learn to pray most, when most troubled,—when weakest,—when most tempted. Still look to the Lord Jesus,—adore him,—love him. Be not dry, like Gideon's sleece, in the midst of this facred

dew. O come for the answer of his prayer; it is thy balm of Gilead, the precious ointment, which runs down to the skirts of his clothing. Wash away thy sin: bathe in his bloody sweat; it is the former and the latter rain, bedewing prophets and apostles.

Let every believer remember, (and rejoice in the remembrance) that sweat, pain, the earth, the grave, are sanctified; and let every stubborn unbeliever beware of the cry of his blood. It now cries better things; by and by, it will cry bitterer

things, than the blood of Abel.

The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Mat. xi. 12.

from feeing the necessity of this holy violence, or from putting it in execution. To prevent the effect of this stratagem, our blessed Lord gives us the plainest directions in these words, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate.—Labour for the meat, that endureth to eternal life, &c, &c." But in no scripture is the direction more plain, than in that of the text, "The kingdom, &c." Let us consider, I. The nature of this kingdom. II. How the violent take it by force. III. Answer an objection to the doctrine of the text.

This kingdom is that of grace, which brings down a heavenly nature and felicity into the believing foul. The kingdom within us "is righte-ousness, and peace, and joy:"—it is Jesus apprehended by faith, as given for us, and felt by love, as living in us. In a word, it is the image of God lost in Adam and restored by Christ;—pardon, holiness, and happiness, issuing in eternal glory.

This kingdom suffereth violence, which is offered, (1) To those Lords, who reign over us,—the world, the devil, the flesh. These rebels must be

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turned out; our own wills must be overcome, and ourselves surrendered up to God, as to our lawful and chosen Sovereign. (2) An humble, holy, sacred violence must be used in prayer:—with Jesus, that he would open, in our hearts, the power of faith, apply the efficacy of his blood, and bestow upon us the spirit of prayer; or in other words, the prayer of faith:—with the Father, that he would look through the pillar of fire, and discomfit all our enemies:—with the Holy Ghost, that

he would take up his abode with us.

Of this violence we have an example in Jacob wreftling with the angel, who faid, "Let me go, for the day breaketh," and he faid, " I will not let thee go, till thou bless me." Gen. xi. 26. Here Jacob, being left alone, improves his folitude; danger and trouble work in him the right way. He prays, prays earnefly, and that against much discouragement. God and man seem to oppose him; for the Angel of the Covenant wreftled, as if to get loofe from his hold. It was a spiritual wreftling; he wept and made supplication, but before he prevails the Angel touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and hindered him from wreftling in his own strength. Then the Spirit alone made intercession; nature failed and grace was conqueror .- " When I am weak, then am I strong." He fays, Let me go, as God once faid to Moles, Let me alone: thus does the Lord formetimes try our faith. This was the case of the woman of Canaan, when Jesus, at first, answered her not, and afterwards faid, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs." But when she still worshipped, prayed, and waited, The obtained these words of approbation, "O woman, great is thy faith!" as well as the answer of her prayer. So the Angel faith, "Let me go, the day breaketh;"-thy affairs want thee; -thou must have rest; but Jacob foregoes all for the bleffing ;-

bleffing,-reft, family, wearinefs, pain; and anfwers, " I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." So must it be with us; none prevail, but those, who take the kingdom by violence. He conquers at last. What is thy name? faith God .-He will have the finner know himself and confess what he is; then he gives the new name, A prince with God. If God be for us, who can be against us? The Angel does not tell him his name; for the tree of life is better than the tree of knowledge. He saw God face to face, and lived. So is it with faithful wrestlers: God resists only to increase our desires; and we must be resolved to hearken to nothing that would hinder. Weariness, care, friends, fear, and unbelief, must all be thrown aside, when we seek to see God face to face, and to be brought into the light of life.

They, who are weary of the Egyptian yoke of outward and inward fin, who cannot rest without the love of Jesus, the life of God, at last become violent. They forcibly turn from the world; by force they attack the Devil; bring themselves, by force, before God; and drag out, by strong confession, the evils that lurk within. Against these they fight, by detesting and denying them. Their strength is in crying mightily to the Lord, and expecting continually that fire, which God will rain from heaven upon them. All this must be done by force, and with great conflicts; for it is against nature, which hath the utmost reluctance

to it.

The words of the text allude to the taking a fortified town by storming it; and this is of all military expeditions the most dangerous. The enemy is covered and hid, and those, who scale the walls, have nothing but their arms and courage.—But can the wrestling soul overcome, can he take this kingdom? Ah no, not by his own strength; but his Joshua will take it for him.

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God only requires, that we should entreat him to do this: The prayer of repentance, the prayer of faith, storm Mount Sion, the city of God. He that is violent shall receive the kingdom of God,—justification and fanctification: But remember, the violent take it by force. He shall have many a hard struggle with God's enemies, and, it may be, many with the Lord himself, before he declares

him conqueror.

Some object, "We have no might; and to endeavour to take the kingdom by violence, is taking the matter out of God's hand: Is it not better to wait for the promise, stand still and see the salvation of God?" If you mean by standing still, not agonizing to enter in at the strait gate, not wrestling prayer, and fighting the good fight of faith:-May God fave you from this stillness! You err. not knowing the scriptures. The standing still there recommended, is to possess your foul in patience, without dejection, fear, and murmuring. Stand still as the apostles, who watched together in prayer, ran with patience the race fet before them, and fought manfully, as faithful foldiers, under the banner of the cross. Any other stillness is of the devil, and leads to his kingdom. Search the New Testament, and shew me one flanding still, after he had been convinced of his wants. Did the Centurion, did the woman of Canaan, did blind Bartimeus stand still? Did St. Paul, did the woman with the bloody iffue stand still? Did not all of them use the power they had? I do not defire you to use, what you have not; only be faithful stewards of the manifold grace entrusted to you. A kingdom, a kingdom of heaven is before you,-power to reign with Jesus as his priests and kings. Stir up then thy faith; reach forward to the things which are before. Become a wreftling Jacob, and you shall shortly be a prevailing Israel. Be not discouraged, for

for as a good man observes, "God frequently gives in one moment, what he hath apparently withheld for many years."

Thou fool, this night thy foul shall be required of thee!

Luke xii. 20.

ET us consider, I. Why our Lord calls the person mentioned in the text, sool,—"Thou sool." II. The sudden, and unexpected separation between this rich man and his all. III. The circumstance of the particular time of his death,—"This night." IV. Make some observations on the nature and value of a soul. V. Observe who shall require the rich man's soul,—"it shall be required." VI. Make some remarks on the last words of the text,—"Thy soul shall be required of thee."

I. It is not without good reason, that our Lord addresses the rich man in the text with "Thou fool." The picture our Lord has drawn of him hath eight strokes, each of which proves this

worldling to have been an egregious fool.

1. He was rich in this world, but neglected being rich towards God, rich in grace. 2. He was perplexed without reason, and exclaimed-" What shall I do! I have not where to bestow my fruits." Had he been wife, he would rather have cried out, with the jailor, "What shall I do to be faved!" or he would have enquired, whether all the houses of his poor neighbours were full, and whether he could not bestow upon them some of those fruits, the abundance of which made him so uneasy. He determined to "pull down his barns:"-not to break off his fins. The pile of them, though towering to heaven, like Babel, did not make him uneasy. 4. He resolved "to build greater barns;" but forgot to build the hopes of his falvation on the Rock of Ages. Mat. viii. 24. 5. He would

ay to his foul, "Soul, thou hast goods laid up:" But had he been wife, he would have confidered, that although he was rich as to his outward circumstances, and the things, which support the body, yet his "foul was poor, miserable, blind, and naked." Rev. iii. 17. 6. He had the folly to promise himself a long life, as if he had a lease of it, figned by his heavenly Lord. Soul, faid he, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: But God faid, "Thou fool, this night," &c. 7. He would fay to his foul, "Soul, take thine ease;" but had he been directed by wisdom, he would have exhorted his foul not to rest till he had obeyed the apostle's precept, "Work out your own falvation with fear and trembling. Phil. ii. 12. Alas! how common and how dangerous is the mistake of the children of this world, who openly follow this fool, and fay either to themfelves, or one to another, "Soul, take thine eafe; take care of being under any concern about falvation, there is no need of fo much ado about religion and heaven." 8. The last mark of the rich man's folly, was to fay to his deluded foul, Eat, drink, and be merry: as if a foul could eat and drink, what money can procure or barns contain. No, my brethren: the grace of God, and the benefits of Christ's death, which are called his flesh and blood, the bread of life, and the living water, are the only food and drink proper for our fouls; and the true mirth and folid joy of a spirit is that, to which St. Paul exhorts us, "Rejoice in the Lord; and again, I fay, rejoice, Phil. iv. 4.

II. The feparation between this rich farmer, and his all, was fudden and unexpected,—" This night," faid God, shall thy foul be required of thee. This night, not so much as to-morrow is allowed him to dispose of those goods, which were laid up for many years: he must fuddenly, immediately.

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fleet. 2. All his landed estate, except a winding sheet. 2. All his landed estate, except a grave. 3. All his barns, houses and halls, except a cossin. 4. All his friends, and relations, without exception: He must go this dismal journey alone and unattended. 5. All his time; his precious time, which the living kill so many ways, and which the dying and the dead would gladly recover, by parting with a world, if they had it to part with. 6. His soul, it is to be feared.

Let us here reflect, how careful we are, to fecure our doors, lest thieves should break in, and take away some of our goods; and yet how careless to provide for death, who carries away all, or rather hurries us away from all at once! What an alarming thought is this, for impenitent sinners! May their souls be required this very night? O let them not plot wickedness, and contrive

vanity, against to-morrow.

III. The circumstance of the particular time of this rich man's death, is very awful,—This night, not this day, shall thy soul, &c. This seems to

imply four things.

I Darkness and horror, which chiefly belong to the night. Of this we have striking illustrations, in the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, and of Sennacharib's army in Judea. 2. "Drowsiness and carnal security, illustrated in the apposite case of the soolish virgins. Mat. xxv. 3. Sadness, in opposition to those nights, which he had perhaps spent in debauchery and vain diversions. 4. Sin and ignorance of the ways of God; which are called darkness and night, works of carkness, &c. in various parts of the scripture.

O think upon this night of death, ye that forget God. How foon may it be here to cast a veil upon your pride, and make it share the sate of Absolom's beauty, Jezebel's paint, and Saul's

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If this night of death is coming upon all! this night, when no man can work! let us follow our Lord's advice, "and work the works of God, while it is day," John ix. 4.

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IV. How wonderful is the nature, how inestimable is the value, of that soul, which was required of this fool; and which shall be required

of us!

How excellent is that noble, that neglected being, in itself? Spiritual,—immortal,—endued with the most glorious faculties,—made after the very

image of God!

How precious is it, as well as how excellent. It is a jewel of inestimable value, and its worth may be estimated, 1. From the admirable texture of the body, which is only the casket where that jewel is placed. 2. From the extraordinary pains, which the sons of men take to repair and adorn the body, whose value depends only on the jewel it contains. 3. From the testimony of Christ, who prefers one soul to the whole material creation;—"What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mat. xvi. 26.

Suffer me then to intreat you, brethren, to beflow on your fouls, pains and care, in fome meafure, proportionable to their worth; at leaft, be not offended with us ministers, for shewing some concern for the salvation of your precious, im-

mortal fouls.

V. Who shall require his foul?—"Thy soul shall be required." The original word, anaireon means, "They shall require." The question then offers itself, Who they are, that shall require the

unprepared worldling's foul?

I answer, 1. "Not Christ, as a Saviour;" for in that capacity he hath nothing to do with dying unbelievers. They would not receive his grace into their hearts, and he will not receive them into his glory. Prov. i. 24. &c. "Nor good angels:"

angels:" We read, indeed, that they carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22; but the rich man found his way to the flames without them. (3) "Nor departed faints," who neither can nor will meddle with unregenerated fouls. For this we may read the conversation between Abraham and the wretch, who prayed to him for help, Luke xvi. Who then? (1) "Some un-(2) Death, who, foreseen accident or distemper. as an officer, delivers the wicked into the hands of the tormentors. (3) Evil Spirits, the ministers of divine justice; which may be inferred from the strong sense of the powers of darkness, which some wicked men have in their last moments. See the case of the memorable Francis Spira.

Believers cheerfully refign their fouls into their Saviour's hands; yea, "they long to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Unbelievers, who have their portion in this world, are loath to leave it; but a peremptory, forcible command, shall set aside all their pleas: their soul

shall be required.

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VI. The last words of the text, afford matter for the last head of the discourse. Death comes to require a soul; "Not of me," says, perhaps, the rich farmer, "Not of me, for I have much goods laid up for many years;" but God says, Of

thee shall thy foul be required.

What! may not the foul of fome poor Lazarus, who pines away in want, sickness and obscurity, be required first? No, says God, it must be required of thee. May not an old Simeon, who longs to depart in peace, be allowed to die for the rich man? No: his hour is come; of him is his soul required. But, perhaps, some of the rich man's servants, at the feet of the bed, may go upon this fatal errand for him? No, says death, he must go himself: of thee is thy soul required. See all those weeping friends, who surround his bed?

bed? May not one of them do for death? No, cries the stern messenger, My errand is to thee.

Consider the peremptoriness of the inexorable messenger. Gold will not bribe him. Entreaties prevail not. He takes no notice of promises of amendment. Tears melt him not. In spite of physicians and medicine, he does his office, and requires of the worldling his unprepared soul.

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The epithet, which God fixes on the rich man belongs, (1) To all who depend upon many years of life, and do not habitually prepare for death. (2) To all whether rich or poor, who are not rich towards God. (3) Especially to those, who, tho they have not the conveniencies, and hardly the necessaries of life, will yet trample on the riches of divine grace and heavenly glory. If the rich worldling was a fool in God's esteem, how doubly foolish are the poor, to whom the gospel is preached in vain?

Ye foolish virgins, ye slumbering souls, awake, —arise,—trim your lamps. Be wise to salvation; be as anxious about your eternal, as he was for his temporal prosperity. Pull down, not your barns, but your sins. Build not larger houses, but "the house, that will stand," when death beats upon you with all its storms: And never say to your soul, "Soul, take thine ease," until you have an habitation, "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Ye, who are wife virgins, and who are preparing to meet the Bridegroom, apply to your fouls, but in a better fense, the words, that the rich fool spake to his soul, "Eat, drink, and be merry." Feed upon the slesh of Christ, and drink his blood; that is, believe the gospel of Jesus, firmly believe that, by his cross, he redeemed you from sin, death, hell, and the grave; and thro saith in him you will be able to rejoice in the Lord,

Lord, with unspeakable joy, and to antedate your heaven.

I befeech thee, awakened finner, who tremblest at Death and Judgment, to come, by the prayer of faith, to the Prince of Life, that thro' the value of his death, he may take away the fling of death, fin, from thy heart. Steadfastly believe these comfortable words of St. Paul, "He tasted death for every man; that he, thro' death, might deftroy him, that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them, who thro' fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage, Heb. ii. 9, 14, 15. If you heartily credit this bleffed report, you will find your fears of death changed into longings after it: and, with your dying breath you will be able, thro' mercy, to challenge the king of terrors, and to fay with the apostle, "O death, where is thy fling? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Test of a New Creature:

Or, Heads of Examination for adult Christians.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the Faith, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

HATEVER is the state of one wholly renewed, must be, in a less degree, the state of all, who are born from above: and whatever is the fruit of perfect holiness, to walk by the same rule must be the way to obtain the same falvation. The image of God is one, grace is the same, and to be in Christ is to believe, and have the fellowship of his Spirit.

Vol. IX. Q Regene-



Regeneration differs only in degrees of strength and foundness. In our early justification the divine life is comparatively small, and mixed with fin; but when perfectly renewed, we are strong, and every part pure, holding, by faith, that salvation, which makes us one with the Son of God.

The law given in our first state, and the law required by the gospel, the covenant of works, and the covenant of faith, are different. Whatever we see in the example of Jesus, and whatever he promises to bestow on his followers, are unquestionable privileges of gospel salvation. Neither is the whole of this salvation, of our justification, or of our renewal after the image of God, finished, till the resurrection, when we shall see him as he is, and beholding him sace to sace, his name shall be written on our foreheads. Nor can we ever have, so much of the likeness of God, as to be incapable of more; but rather the more we obtain of his image and savour, the more we are fitted to receive for ever and ever.

HEADS OF EXAMINATION.

the meek and lowly mind, that was in Jesus? Am I dead to all desire of praise? If any despise me, do I like them the worse for it? Or if they love and approve me, do I love them more on that account? Am I willing to be accounted useless, and of no consequence,—glad to be made of no reputation? Do humiliations give me real pleasure, and is it the language of my heart,

Make me little, and unknown, Lov'd and priz'd by God alone?

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II. Does God bear witness in my heart that it is purified;—that in all things, I please him?

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III. Is the life I live, by the faith of the Son of God; fo that Christ dwelleth in me? Is Christ the life of all my affections and designs, as my soul is the life of my body? Is my eye single, and my soul full of light,—all eye within and without;—always watchful?

IV. Have I always the presence of God? Does no cloud come between God, and the eye of my faith? Can I "rejoice evermore, pray without

ceafing, and in every thing give thanks?"

V. Am I faved from the fear of man? Do I fpeak plainly to all, neither fearing their frowns, nor feeking their favours? Have I no shame of religion; and am I always ready to confess Christ, to suffer with his people, and to die for his sake?

VI. Do I deny myself at all times, and take up my cross as the Spirit of God leads me? Do I embrace the cross of every fort, being willing to give up my ease and convenience to oblige others; or do I expect them to conform to my hours, ways, and customs? Does the cross sit light upon me, and am I willing to suffer all the will of God? Can I trample on pleasure and pain? Have I

A foul inur'd to pain,
To hardship grief and loss;
Bold to take up, firm to sustain,
The consecrated cross?

VII. Are my bodily senses, and outward things all sanctified to me? Do I not seek my own things, to please myself? Do I seek grace more for God than myself; preferring the glory of God to all in earth or heaven, the giver to the gift?

VIII. Am I poor in spirit? Do I take pleafure in infirmities, necessities, distresses, reproaches; so that out of weakness, want, and danger, I may cast myself on the Lord? Have I no salse

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faved, as a poor finner, by grace alone?

IX. Do I not lean to my own understanding? Am I ready to give up the point, when contradicted, unless conscience forbid; and am I easy to be persuaded? Do I esteem every one better than myself? Am I as willing to be a cypher, as to be useful, and does my zeal burn bright, notwithstanding this willingness to be nothing?

X. Have I no false wisdom, goodness, strength; as if the grace I feel were my own? Do I never take that glory to myself, which belongs to Christ? Do I feel my want of Christ, as much as ever, to be my all; and do I draw near to God, as poor and needy, only presenting before him his well

beloved Son? Can I fay,

Every moment Lord I need
The merit of thy death?
Still I'll hang upon my God,
Till I thy perfect glory fee,
Till the sprinkling of thy blood
Shall speak me up to thee?

Do I find joy in being thus nothing, empty, undeferving, giving all the glory to Christ: or do I wish, that grace made me fomething, instead of God all?

XI. Have I meeknes? Does it bear rule over all my tempers, affections, and desires; so that my hopes, fears, joy, zeal, love, and hatred, are duly balanced? Do I feel no disturbance from others, and do I desire to give none? If any offend me do I still love them, and make it an occasion to pray for them? If condemned by the world, do I intreat;—if condemned by the godly, am I one, in whose mouth there is no reproof; replying only as conscience, and not as impatient nature dictates? If in the wrong do I consess it? If in the right, do I submit, being content to do

well, and suffer for it? It is the sin of superiors to be overbearing, of inferiors to be stubborn; if, then, I am a servant, do I yield not only to the gentle, but to the froward; committing my cause in silence to God; or if a master, do I shew all long-suffering? The Lord of all was, as he that serveth: if I am the greatest, do I make myself least and the servant of all; if a teacher, am I lowly, meek, and patient, not conceited, self-willed, nor dogmatic? Am I ready to give up the claims of respect due to age, station, parent, master, &c; or do I rigidly exact those demands?

XII. Do I poffes refignation: am I content with whatever is, or may be; feeing that God, the Author of all events, does, and will do, all for my good? Do I defire nothing but God. willing to part with all, if the Lord manifest his will for my fo doing? Do I know how to abound and yet not gratify unnecessary wants; but being content with things needful, do I faithfully and freely dispose of all the rest for the help of others? Do I know, how to fuffer need: is my confidence in God unshaken, while I feel the distress of poverty, and have the prospect of future want, while, humanly speaking, strangling were better than life; and, in these circumstances, do I pity those, who having plenty, waste it in excess, instead of helping me?

XIII. Am I just; doing in all things, as I would others should do unto me? Do I render due homage to those above me, not presuming on their lenity and condescension? As a superior, do I exercise no undue authority, taking no advantage of the timidity, respect, or necessity of any man? Do I consider the great obligation superiority lays me under, of being lowly and kind, and of set

ting a good example?

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XIV. Am I temperate, using the world, and not abusing it? Do I receive outward things in the order of God, making earth a scale to heaven? Is the satisfaction I take in the creation consistent with my being dead to all below, and a means of leading me more to God? Is the turn of my mind and temper in due subjection, not leading me to any extreme, either of too much silence, or of too much talkativeness, of reserve or freedom?

XV. Am I courteous, not fevere; fuiting myfelf to all with fweetness; striving to give no one pain, but to gain and win all for their good?

XVI. Am I vigilant; redeeming time, taking every opportunity of doing good; or do I spare myfelf, being careless about the souls and bodies to which I might do good? Can I do no more than I do? Do I perform the most service offices, such as require labour, and humiliation, with cheerfulness? Is my conversation always seasoned with salt, at every time administering some kind of sayour to those I am with?

XVII. Do I love God with all my heart? Do I constantly present myself, my time, substance, talents, and all that I have, a living sacrifice? Is every thought brought into subjection to Christ? Do I like, or dislike, only such things as are

pleasing, or displeasing, to God?

XVIII. Do I love God with all my flrength, and are my spiritual faculties always vigorous? Do I give way to no finful languor? Am I always on my watch? Do not business, worldly care, and conversation, damp my fervour and zeal for God?

XIX. Do I love my neighbour as myself: every man for Christ's sake, and honour all-men, as the image of God? Do I think no evil, listen to no groundless surmises, nor judge from appearances? Can I bridle my tongue, never speaking fpeaking of the fault of another, but with a view to do good; and when I am obliged to do it, have I the testimony, that I sin not? Have I that love, which hopeth, believeth, and endureth all things?

XX. How am I in my fleep? If Satan prefents an evil imagination, does my will immedi-

ately refift, or give way to it?

XXI. Do I bear the infirmities of age or fickness, without seeking to repair the decays of nature by strong liquors; or do I make Christ my sole support, casting the burden of a seeble body into the arms of his mercy?

Many consider that perfect love, which casteth out fear, as instantaneous: All grace is so; but what is given in a moment, is enlarged and established by diligence and sidelity. That which is instantaneous in its descent, is perfective in its increase.

This is certain,—too much grace cannot be defired or looked for; and to believe and obey with all the power we have, is the high-way to receive all we have not. There is a day of Pentecost for believers, a time, when the Holy Ghost descends abundantly. Happy they, who receive most of this perfect love, and of that establishing grace, which may preserve them from such falls and decays as they were before liable to.

Jesus, Lord of all, grant thy purest gifts to every waiting disciple. Enlighten us with the knowledge of thy will, and shew us the mark of the prize of our high calling. Let us die to all thou art not; and seek thee with our whole heart, till we enjoy the sulness of the purchased Possession.

Amen!

A Gentleman from Yorkshire, now resident in London, has obligingly favoured us with the following Letter of Mr. FLETCHER's on the PROPHECIES: The Superscription is lost; but from the Contents, there can be little doubt but it was wrote to Mr. Wesley, in the year 1755.

REV. SIR,

Was very much surprised to according Repart of a Letter, written on the impending Repart of a Letter, written on the impending Re-Was very much surprised to hear you read volutions; they have often been, for some years, the subject of my meditations, and of many conversations with a great Divine abroad. That Gentleman, as eminent for his uncommon learning, as he is remarkable for the use he has made of it, from his youth, shewed the greatest inclination to dive into the apparent obscurities of the Prophecies contained in the Bible. That inclination increafed with his knowledge and piety; it followed him every where. When upon his travels, he generally got what light he could, from the learned in that uncommon branch of knowledge, and had several conferences with Sir Isaac Newton and others.

For these sifty years, he has spent his time in making himself persectly master of the Oriental Languages, which are become as samiliar to him as Greek and Latin; and in comparing and explaining the various Prophecies scattered in the Old and New Testament. Therefore, if his labours have been attended with a blessing from above, and a measure of God's Holy Spirit, he is, in all appearance, a man most likely to discover what God has been pleased to hide, for a time, under the veil of Prophetic Figures. As I have often read his works, both those that have been printed, and those which he has not yet been able

to publish, on account of the strong opposition of several people, I shall take the liberty to give

you a short account of his System.

It is, as far as I can judge, pretty much the fame as the Gentleman's whose letter you read lately; and supported by the numerous train of his arguments; it seldom fails either to silence, or convict those that oppose it; it agrees with the tenour of the whole Bible; it gives fuch grand ideas of God's Justice in punishing the wicked. and his faithfulness in remembering the gracious promises he has made to the faithful: It squares fo well with history and chronology, (I would almost fay with the present state of the world,) that if it is not true, one must confess, it is at least. very probable. This has been owned by numbers of Clergymen, and even by some of those, who, because "the Lord delays his Coming." think that the world shall always remain in the same state.

Let me beg of you, Sir, for the fake of that Gentleman, whom I have great reason to honour, not to judge absolutely of him by what I shall say; considering that clear water running thro' a foul pipe, may easily contract a disagreeable and muddy taste. I confess, I want a competent knowledge of Scripture, and the degree of prophane learning, necessary to illustrate it; so that if you observe in these sheets, any inconsistency, it is probably, all my own.

According to that Divine's opinion, we are come to the last times, the grand catastrophe of God's drama draws near apace; he shall soon be avenged, first of his unfaithful servants, and next of his barefaced enemies; in a sew years he will purge his sloor, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. Every Christian ought then to prepare himself for that day, which will come as a thief in the night; and to labour for a living Q 5

Faith, the Ark which alone will earry us fafe to the Harbour, amidst the universal deluge of woe,

which is going to overflow the Earth.

Here follow some of the reasons on which his opinion is founded. 1st. Consider Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which is a rough sketch of the world's four universal Revolutions: Three are past long ago; the Empires of the Assyrians, Persians, and Greeks, have disappeared: The Iron Legs, that represented the strength of the Roman Empire under the Confuls and Emperors, have had the fame fate; the Feet only remain, which being " made of Clay and Iron, partly weak and partly strong," express plainly the remains of the Roman Monarchy, which is nothing but a weak compound of spiritual and temporal power, that does not cleave better together than Iron to Clay. And whereas the feet of the statue ended in ten Toes, so was the Roman Empire divided into ten kingdoms, these were still united together by the Clay, i. e. the Pope's erroneous religion and idolatrous worship.

"In the days of these ten Kings," says the Prophet Daniel, " shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed: For it shall swallow up all these kingdoms, and fland for ever: Forafmuch as a Stone cut from the mountain without hands;" (a small number of true Christians sent from Mount Sion, without the hand of mortal man, and by the Spirit of God alone; or Jesus himself, the Corner-stone that was cut off by God's justice on Mount Calvary,) " shall smite the feet of the Statue," the last of the four Monarchies; " and the pieces of it shall become as the chaff, carried away by the wind, and no place shall be found for them; but the Stone that shall smite the Image, will become a great Mountain, and fill the whole Earth." 2dly. Compare with this, the vision of the seventh chapter, where

where the fourth beast that had Iron Teeth, to devour all, answers clearly to the Iron Legs of Nebuchadnezzar's Image; for as this had ten Toes, so had that ten Horns; viz. the ten Kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was divided; those of Burgundy and Lombardy; that of the Vandals, the Eastern and Western Empires, England, France, Spain, Portugal and Poland. Betwixt these ten Horns did another come up, i. e. the Pope;—who aggrandized himself at the expence of the other kings, and before which three of the horns fell, the Kingdoms of Lombardy, Burgundy, and that of the Vandals, who were once possessed of a great part of France, Spain, and Africa, but are

now no longer known but in History.

" This Horn had Eyes;" i. e. an appearance of wisdom, and a great deal of fraud; " and a mouth that spake great things against the Most High: It warred against the Saints;" and so has done the Pope; millions have fallen, as fo many victims to his cruelty, pride, and persecuting spirit: But we are near the time, when having fully, " prevailed against them, they shall be given unto him for a time, times, and a division of time;" but after this last raging of Antichrist, "his Body shall be destroyed; then the Saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess it for ever and ever:" This will be the end of the matter: And if any one meditates thereon with fingleness of heart, his thoughts like Daniel's will be troubled in him, and his countenance changed, and he will keep the matter in his heart. 3dly. Compare again this vision, with that which is contained in the following chapter, where the Prophet having foretold the ruin of the Persian Empire, the conquest of Alexander, and the division of his dominions between four kings, comes at once to the little Horn, that should spring from one of them; namely, from that of Greece or Macedonia:

Macedonia; for as the Spirit of God had shewn the Prophet before, all that concerned the beginning of the 4th kingdom, he passes lightly over it, to come to the main point, the rising of the little Horn, at whose destruction the Empire of the

Saints shall begin.

Let it be remembered here, that Constantine, having transported into Greece the seat of the Roman Empire, renewed, (as it were) that of Macedonia, of which Byzantium was one of the chief cities; and that it was under him, and his successors, that the Bishop of Rome increased in honours, and began to lift up himself above all the Bishops and Patriarchs in the world; so that in two or three hundred years, he "waxed exceeding great in the pleasant land, and cast down; and stampt upon," Kings and Emperors, those Stars in the heaven of government; he took away the daily sacrifice, abolished or quite dissignred the true worship of God and Jesus, and cut down the Truth to the ground, with his army.

Here the Prophet saw a Saint asking another Saint, How long, the church should be thus corrupted and desolate? And the answer was, till the end of 2300 days, and then the sanctuary should be cleansed.—Here is a number given; a number by which we may know that we are come to the very time the Spirit of God had in view: A number which fixes the beginning of the things that are coming upon the earth: Let us take some

notice of it.

1. When shall the sanctuary begin to be cleansed, in such a measure, as to deserve to be taken notice of by the Spirit of God? At the end of 2300 days? which are proved to be prophetic days, and to signify each a whole year, by the prophecy of the seventy weeks, and many other places of Scripture. 2. What is the epocha from which we must begin to reckon those 2300 years? It is evident it must be the time of the vision itself,

which the prophet has taken particular care to obferve; for in the first verse of the chapter, "In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar, says he, a vision appeared to me, even unto me Daniel."

2. But how can we know certainly the time of Belshazzar's reign? I must own this question is not fo eafily answered as the others; but it can be resolved, with some knowledge of history and chronology; for if we compare the writings of facred and prophane historians, if we trust the Canons of Ptolemy, which have been tried by Astronomical observations, with Petarius, Usferius, Prideaux, and others, we shall agree that Belshazzar, (the same whom the historians call Nirieafoolaffar, or Nerigliffor,) having killed Evilmerodac, the fon of Nebocolassar, or Nebuchadnezzar, feized upon the Affyrian throne, A. M. 3476, i. e. 559 years before Christ, or, as Torniel will have it, about twenty years after; because afferting that Evilmerodae (instead of two years that the above mentioned Chronologist give to his reign,) enjoyed the diadem twenty-three years, which would make the reign of his fuccessor, our Belshazzar, begin about 538 years before Christ. If we admit the first opinion, which is more probable, it follows that the third year of Belshazzar's reign falls in 556 years before Christ, which is the epocha wanted, add to it four or five years, on account of the difference of the Judaical year of 360 days, and ours that is 365, and above; add three years more for the time that Belshazzar had reigned when Daniel had the vision, and we have about 550, which being fubstracted from 2300, give the year 1750, for the cleanfing of the fanctuary; or for fuch a tolerable progress in the cleanfing of it, as may be taken notice of, and attract the eyes of all those who wait for this cleanfing of God's Church. 4. If .

4. If any one should ask, What happened so remarkable about that time, as to shew that the Sanctuary is in some degree cleansed, or that this important work is really carried on with any tolerable fuccess? I would answer, That God was working at that time, and still works, such a work, as never was feen fince the Apostles days; he has fent some chosen servants of his, both in these kingdoms and abroad, who, by the manifest affistance of God's Spirit, have removed the filthy doctrine of justification by works, and the outward Christless performance of moral duties, which pollute the fanctuary, and make it an abomination to the Lord. The Holy Ghost is given, and the love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of believers, as in the days of old; and the Lord has taken to himself, servants, that will rejoice to stand boldly for the Truth, to remain unshaken in the evil day, and to fight manfully his battles, when he shall call them to it. I own that the cleanfing is but begun, but this first Revolution may, in all probability, be the forerunner of a greater: God has called; a few have obeyed his call; the generality still shut their eyes and ears against the tender invitations of their Lord, and continue to pollute the Sanctuary, and to look on the Blood of the Lamb as an unholy thing. Shall not God carry on his work? Shall the creature still refift his Creator, and the arm of flesh be stronger than the living God! Not fo! he will not always frive with obdurate hearts: What the gentle breathings of his Spirit cannot perform, he will do with war, fword and fire, plague and famine, tribulation and anguish; he is going to gird on his fword, and his right hand shall teach him terrible things: Nations refuse the sceptre of his mercy; what remains then, but to rule them with an iron sceptre, and break them in pieces like a potter's veffel? 5. If

5. If this answer, satisfying as it is, does not content those, who will not believe even what they see, I would answer farther, that the calculation above-mentioned is so far from being made to reach farther than chronology will allow, (as I have heard some object) that it might admit of an addition of twenty-one years, according to Torniel, as I said before; which would put off the cleansing of the Sanctuary till 1770. Chronologists may mistake in a few years, but cannot err upon the whole; and as God is true and saithful, so it is manifest, that the prophecy of 2300, must be fully accomplished in our days, or

those of the next generation.

6. To fet the argument, drawn from the number of 2300, in a clear light; it is necessary to prove, that it was not defigned to shew the time of the cleanfing the Sanctuary by Judas Maccabæus and his brethren, from the pollution of Antiochus Epiphanes; nor the cleanfing of Jefus and his Apostles, who freed the Church of God from pharifaical hypocrify, and fadducean prophaneness; nor lastly, that of Luther, &c. who cleansed the outfide, and washed white the Sanctuary, but were not able to remove the filth of unbelief that remained within. Many arguments might be drawn from the number itself, which agrees with no cleanfing but that in these days; it will be easier to draw them from the general drift of the prophecy, and the context of the chapter. Observe first these words, "at the time of the end shall this vision be fulfilled," where the word end, fignifies plainly, the catastrophe of God's drama, the last act of the wicked tragedy men have been acting for near 6000 years, and the margur amoxaduting of our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, in the 19th verse, the angel said to Daniel, "Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation, for at the time appointed the end shall be." What end is here spoken, of if it is not that of God's universal scheme?

Ponder also these words, (ver. 26.) "Wherefore thut thou up the vision, for it shall be for many days;" which agrees far better with our times, than those of Antiochus, Paul, or Luther. Observe again, these words of an angel to Daniel, chap, x. "I am come to make thee understand what shall befal thy people in the latter days," for the vision is for many days, (where it is plain that latter Days here, and End, in the 8th chapter, fignify but one and the fame thing. The angel. according to his promife, tells the prophet in the 11th chapter, many particulars of those things that shall foon come upon us, and of that time of trouble, which will be matchless and unheard of before; Then, adds the angel: "Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book:" And who is the man, fo little conversant with History, as to fay, that here is meant the perfecution of Antiochus, which, tho' fierce for awhile by no means answers the angel's words; or the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; for though the troubles of the Jews were beyond expression, yet the Spirit of God had a far more distant prospect, as can be proved by the affurance the angel gives Daniel, that "at that time, his people should be delivered;" which neither was then, nor has been hitherto: the Jews fighing still in a shameful banishment, and expecting yet that promised deliverance. An argument as strong as the foregoing may be drawn from the first refurrection, which is to take place soon after that deliverance, "when many of them that fleep shall awake;" whereas, at the fecond and last refurrection, not only many, but all the fouls of dead

men shall re-enter their bodies; but more con-

cerning this afterwards.

7. As what I have been writing on the number 2300, forms a compleat proof, I shall not trouble you, Sir, with longer digressions upon the various prophetic numbers that occur in the Bible, concerning the things we expect to see in a short time; let me only beg of you, to observe the harmony of

the following ones.

Rev. x. 6. "And the Angel swore by him who liveth for ever and ever, that when the seven thunders should have uttered their voices, xgovoi ex isal, there will not be a time more; which word time, in St. John and Daniel, signifies a year, and a prophetic year, viz. 360 years. If it be true, that the seven voices here mentioned, signify the reformation of the seven Protestant Countries, it will follow, that from the Reformation there will not be a whole time, or 360 years, "till the mystery of God be accomplished," which he told for our comfort, his servants the prophets.

Chap. xi. 2, "Do not measure the Porch, for it is given to the Gentiles, and they shall tread under foot the holy city forty-two months." Ver. 3, "My two Witnesses shall preach 1260 days." Chap. xiii. 5, "Power was given to the Beast to

fulfil forty-two months."

The Woman, or true Church, flying from the Serpent, retires to a place where the is fed for a time, times, and part of a time; which number plainly fignifies three prophetic years and an half, and falls in a wonderful manner with the 42 months that are allowed the beaft or pope; and the 42 months during which, two, or a few witnesses, will in spite of opposition, maintain the truth as it is in Jesus, against antichrist and their false brethren.

N. B. 1260 days, is equal to 42 months, or three years and a half, Daniel xii. 11. From the time that the daily facrifice should be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be 1290 prophetic days. It is easy to observe, that there is some years difference between the numbers of Daniel, and those of St. John; the reason is, that the Apostle had the beginning of the war against antichrist in view; whereas the Prophet looked farther, viz. to some remarkable battle that he shall lose, and in which he shall be utterly destroyed; as for his second number, it seems to refer to that happy year when the remotest nations of the earth shall have embraced the Christian Faith.

You may probably have observed, Sir, that the various numbers which come to the same, or very near, must be reckoned from the time the Bishop of Rome shewed himself plainly to be the head. Antichrist, "and set himself up as a God, in the temple of God;" which was not in a very remarkable manner till the end of the 5th Century: Add then 500 years to 1260, and you will see, that in a sew years these plain prophecies concerning the preaching of the two witnesses, the slight of the woman into the desart, and the duration of Antichrist's reign, will soon be accomplished.

It is worth observation, that as the tyranny of Antichrist will last 1260 years; so his last raging or that tribulation which will be so uncommon, shall last also 1260 common days, and not prophetic ones, because of the Elect's sake those days shall be shortened, according to our Lord's merciful promise: this observation will cast a great light upon all those numbers, and prevent many objections.

Having thus laid the prophetic numbers as the foundation of the edifice, I shall now give a short sketch of the above mentioned Gentleman's super-structure.

Seducers will come, faying, "Here is Christ, or there, and they shall seduce many; we shall hear

hear of wars and rumours of war: a kingdom shall rife against another kingdom; there will be plagues and famines, troubles and earthquakes, but this is but the beginning of woes:" For the man of fin (recovered of the wound he received by the reformation) shall gather an incredible strength; and fatan, knowing that he has but a short time, will rage beyond all expression. God, whose wrath is justly stirred up by the iniquities and unbelief, nay open prophaneness of the Protestants, will give them into the hands of their enemies, as he formerly delivered his ungrateful people into the hands of the Affyrians; for his Judgments always begin at his house. Then will come that dreadful perfecution described in a hundred places of the facred writings. " As the love of many will be cold," and there will be, comparatively, no faith upon the earth, the apostacy foretold by all the prophets will foon take place; begin, in all probability, by the Lutherans in Germany, and follow in all the Protestant countries. Here cruelties unheard of fince the begining of the world, will be the refining fire of our decayed Faith; part of the reformed Christians will be destroyed by the sword, or by famine; part will be carried into captivity, part will remain to ferve their cruel conquerors, who (notwithstanding their falling away from the pure, outward worship) will treat them in a most terrible manner.

As for Christ's faithful Witnesses, having with-stood this grand apostacy with all their might, and confirmed their weak brethren, by whom they will often be betrayed into the hands of their enemies, they shall, for the greatest part, seal their saith with their blood, get the palm of martyrdom, and water the earth with rivers of blood, that the Lord may the sooner cover it with his promised harvest.

Those

Those that shall escape, being hidden and saved in a wonderful manner, will be the feed of that harvest, and will remain concealed three years and a half, (see Rev. xi. the death and refurrection of the two witnesses) when God, giving them an extraordinary measure of his Spirit; with an undaunted boldness, shall call on them to "lift up their voices like trumpets," to proclaim pardon in the name of Jesus, and to rouse deluded nations, and bid them come out of Babylon, that they may not partake of her plagues, and be confumed at the appearing of the Lord. Then shall the tenth part of the City fall, or a great Kingdom, leaving the party of the man of fin, will turn to God, and give the fignal of an universal reformation: Others shall join it in time, and all together will get the better of God's adversaries, in spite of their desperate refistance.

Rome shall be destroyed, and Antichistianism will share the same sate; The greatest wonders and signs shall attend these Revolutions, insomuch that Turks and Jews, Heathens and Savages, will know the hand of the Lord, bow their stubborn hearts to his grace, and "Give glory to him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, for

ever and ever."

Give me leave here, Rev. Sir, to propose to you, a thing that many will look upon as a great paradox, but as yet sufficient ground in Scripture to raise the expectation of every Christian, who sincerely looks for the Coming of our Lord; I mean, the great probability, that in the midst of this grand Revolution, our Lord Jesus will suddenly come down from Heaven, and go himself, conquering and to conquer. For, what but the greatest prejudice, could induce Christians to think that the coming of our Lord spoken of in so plain terms by three Evangelists, is his last Coming before the universal Judgment, and the End of the

World; fince there is hardly any thing in those Chapters that could have given occasion to such a

thought.

1. Jesus himself says, that immediately ($\varepsilon \upsilon \vartheta \varepsilon \omega \varsigma$) after the tribulation, which has been proved to be very near, the Powers of Heaven will be shaken, and all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory; and to the end of the chapter. Our Lord does not say a word of the End of the World, and the Universal Judgment, of which he does not speak till the end of the following chapter, so far from consounding his third coming with his second.

2. I read the very same account in the 13th of St. Mark, when Jesus having spoken of the general Apostasy, and "abominable desolation," spoken of by Daniel, (which of course cannot be that of the Jews at the taking of Jerusalem) he adds, "Let him that readeth understand. In those days the fun shall be darkened, &c. and then shall they fee the Son of Man," &c. Who does not perceive, that Christ will come to give the finishing stroke to the great work begun by the might of his Spirit, to establish his kingdom upon earth, and to bring those happy days, "When ten people shall lay hold on an Israelite, faying, Lead us to the Temple of the Lord;" when the kid shall feed with the lion, and a child lead them: when he that dieth young "fhall die an hundred years old;" and when "righteousness shall cover the earth, as the waters fill the fea." I cannot conceive how fo many divines have fuch an idea of God's Wifdom, as to think (contrary to the plain text of his word) that fo happy a time will last but a few days; and that this Αποκαλυψις ζων πανζων will no fooner take place, but the earth will be destroyed by fire; such must be however the inconsistent opinion

opinion of those who confound our Lord's second

with his third coming.

3. After our Lord's ascension, the angels promise the Apostles, who then represented all true believers, that they should see Jesus Christ coming from heaven, but said not a word of the end of the world.

4. The fecond coming of our Lord was fo frequently talked of in the Apostles' days, that many expected it daily, fo that St. Paul, who knew it was yet afar off, thought it necessary to refute the strong expectation of the Thessalonians concerning the nearness of Christ's appearing: "That day will not come," fays he, " before the apostacy, and the Revelation of the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition:" which is the same as if he had said, You shall know that the Lord will shortly come, when you shall see the Universal Apostacy that I foretell you: Nay, the Apostle goes a great deal farther, for in the same chapter he assures us, that the Lord "will destroy the Man of Sin by the brightness of his presence." Can any thing be plainer?

5. Our Lord told his Apostles, at the last supper, that he should not drink any more of the fruit of the vine, till he should drink it new in the Kingdom of Heaven; which kingdom will be set up on earth, thousands of years before the end of

the world.

Having thus established the second coming of our Lord, give me leave, Sir, to remove a specious

objection:

Those who dislike an opinion because it is not generally received, will object, that all that is said in Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii, &c. of our Lord's second coming, is certainly spoken of his last, immediately before the judgment, because Jesus says, that the Angels shall gather his Elect from the four winds, which seems to imply the resurrection,

and the judgment following it: But so far from granting it, this is the very thing that shews our Lord did not speak of the end of the world and the judgment: Else why should not the reprobate be gathered from the four winds, as well as the Elect; shall these only be judged, while the mouldered bodies of the wicked shall rest in peace; is

this scriptural?

What then can be the meaning of that Gathering of the Elect? The Question would be too deep for a short sighted man to answer, had not the Spirit of God revealed it to St. John, and all the believers who with an humble mind search the writings of the Prophets. I will begin at Rev. xvii. to shew by the by, how well every thing I have wrote concerning the Man of Sin, and his destruction, agrees with the account St. John gives us of his visions.

There he gives fuch strong characteristics, as at once points out Rome, and the Pope; they agree extremely well with St. Paul's and Daniel's description: The beast, and the ten Kings that desend it, "having made war with the Lamb, shall at last be overcome by him, whereupon the ten Kings (xiii. 16.) forsaking the whore, or Popish Idolatry, shall rebel in their turn against the Pope, and with the Lord's unexpected assistance, shall destroy him, his City, and all his adherents.

The xviii. chapter, is a fublime description of the vast alteration which this fall of Babylon will cause in the world; pride and luxury falling

with the same blow.

The xix. chapter contains a magnificent account of the fudden manner in which God's Kingdom shall take place: Christ comes down, (this is again his second appearing, not distinguished enough from the third by our divines); Christ comes down

to be avenged of his enemies, who are all deftroyed in a last and decisive battle, whereupon all "the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdoms of our Lord."

The xx. chapter displays to our expectation, the most glorious scene that can be on earth. "Satan is bound for a thousand years," and if they are Prophetic ones, for 360,000.* "Thrones are set up, and Judgment is given to those that fit on them; which probably refers to what our Saviour promifed his Apostles, that at his coming, "They should fit upon twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the Testimony of Jesus and for the Word of God, as well as the fouls of those that had not worshipped the Beast nor it's Image. &c:" and, having been gathered from the four winds (Matt. xxiv.) "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years: But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished: this is the first Resurrection: Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first Resurrection, on fuch the fecond death hath no power, but they shall be Priests of God and Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

This is taking away all the difficulty arising from that gathering of the Elect so long before the day of judgment, and it confirms the ideas you give us in your hymns of God's wrath and

mercy.

^{*} I should rather be of this opinion, for a day is before the Lord as 1000 years, and 1000 years as a day. How would at last vanish the pitiful objections of unbelievers concerning God's chusing to create a world, where the good were to bear no proportion to the wicked! What a fine instance should we have of God's mercy, and of the efficacy of our Saviour's blood! How gloriously would these words be explained.--"I punish to the third or fourth generation, but shew mercy unto thousands [of generations] of them that love me!"

" His wrath doth flowly move,

" His mercy flows apace."

Nor can I conceive, that Jesus would accept of a kingdom without his members, without the "heirs

of God and joint heirs of Christ."

The world, however, shall not last always in this happy state: Ezekiel and St. John are very express on this article; Satan shall be loosed at last out of his prison, and seduce two powerful nations, Gog and Magog; but this second almost Universal Rebellion will be quenched, as prosperously as that of Antichrift. How long the World fhall last after this, no one knows, not even the Angels of GoD; but it is certain, that all those things must come to pass before the Conflagration of this Globe, spoken of by St. Peter, as well as before the Second Refurrection and Judgment: fee the end of chapter xx. We have in the xxi. chap. an account of the Palingeny, [Regeneration,] of the earth after its purification by fire, of the New Jerusalem, and of the ravishing happiness of those who shall have persevered unto the end.

This is, Sir, a short account of the Gentleman's system, which far from searing a severe examination, does never appear in a better and clearer light, than when it is compared with the writings of all the Prophets and Apostles, with the prophetic Psalms, and, in a word, with the

whole Bible.

Give me leave to conclude with fome reflections, that naturally flow from what has been faid on that

fystem.

1. Many People, I know, look on the meditations of Prophecies, so expressly enjoined by St. Peter, as one of the greatest instances of presumption and enthusiasm; because they believe there is no sure ground to build upon, and that it is a land of darkness, in which the most enlightened Christon. IX.

tians will never fail to stumble and fall shamefully: But is it probable that God, who foretold to a year, and very clearly, the deliverance of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and the building of the fecond temple, and the birth and death of the Messiah; is it probable, (I say) that he should have been filent, or not have spoken as clearly concerning his coming to destroy the destroyers, and to set up that kingdom which we pray for, when we daily fay, according to our Lord's appointment, "Thy kingdom come?" If God has exactly foretold, for the comfort of believers, the various revolutions that have happened to his church in ages past, is it possible that he should have left himself without a witness concerning the most important of all, I mean the last; if he shewed the prophets the first acts of his drama, is it not highly probable he has not forgot the last, without which his wisdom, justice, and mercy, would always remain hid under a thick cloud ?

2. Let none fay, that Jesus himself, as a man, knew not the end of the world; and that Moses fays, "hidden things are for the Lord, but revealed ones for us and for our children:" I acknowledge that the end of the world, and the time of the purification of this globe by diffolution and fire, is a fecret too deeply hid in the glass of God's decrees for any man to fathom, before God himfelf is pleafed to reveal it; but no body talks here of the end of the world; no body fixes either the hour or day, nor even the year of Christ's second appearing; fince he did not think fit to reveal it to us, we ought to stand in continual readiness for it. For, supposing this system to be true in all points, supposing the tribulation is to begin next year, it will still be impossible to determine whether Jesus will come down in ten or fifty years, fo that our Lord's

Lord's words are true, in all their extent, even now, for that day and hour, and even that year, knoweth no man; yet we expect to fee the full cleanfing of his fanctuary, by the fire of perfecution, the destroying of Antichrist and Unbelief his great enemies, the fubduing of all nations to his eafy yoke, the calling of the Jews, the fulfilling of God's gracious promifes to that long scattered seed of Abraham, and the bringing of those times when the fear of the Lord shall cover the face of the earth, as the waters do that of the fea. Where is the child of God that dares to fay, that all these things must not come to pass before the end of the world; and if fo, when should they happen but in the time he has been pleased to fix in his holy Bible? Where is that man that makes God a liar, because he is an unbeliever? Shall the Lord fay, and shall he not do? Shall he promise, and shall he not perform? If he has borne with the wickedness of the world so long, not being willing that any man should perish, shall he delay, to all eternity, to fulfil his threatenings? God forbid; the day is fixed, it is foretold; and though the Vision was to be after many days, as the angel faid to Daniel, yet it may be fulfilled in a few days for us, who live in the last times.

3. It is lawful, yea, needful, that we and our children, should often think of these things: for hidden things are for the Lord, but these are revealed for us, and our children; "they are revealed in all the prophets from Moses to John, and more especially in the Revelations of this beloved Apostle: Let but those objectors ponder the word Aroxadudis, and they will be ashamed to say, that we must not look into those things be-

cause they were never revealed unto us.

4. If Jesus told his disciples, that it was not theirs, to know the times when those things should be accomplished, it does not follow that it must

be hid from us, who are far nearer concerned in them than they were; besides, how should they have understood and bore those things, before they had received the Comforter, since they thought them bitter, after they had obtained the divine gift, when they had some knowledge of them? Add to this, that Daniel's Vision was to be "closed till the end," and could not be perfectly known till very near the time of the fulfilling of it.

5. It is remarkable, that more books have been written upon the Prophecies these last hundred years, than were ever known before, and all (those at least which I have read) agree that these things will, in all probability soon come upon the earth. I know many have been grossy mistaken as to the year, but because they were rash, shall we be stupid? because they said, "To DAY;" shall we say, "Never;" and cry, "Peace, peace," when we should look about us with eyes full of expectation?

6. I know, that a good part of an hundred thoufand Protestants, scattered in France, expect some great revolution, that will turn at last to their good, and re-unite them to the children of above 200,000 of their brethren, that were either expelled the kingdom, or forced to leave it, because they "would not take the mark of the beast in

heir hands or on their foreheads."

Let us not judge rashly, nor utter vain predictions in the name of the Lord; but yet let us look about us with watchful eyes, lest the enemy take an advantage of us, and we lose the opportunity of rousing people out of their sleep, of confirming the weak brethren, and building up in our most holy faith, those who know in whom they have believed. If we are mistaken in forming conjectures, if the phenomena we hear of every where, are but common providences; if these things happen not to us, but to our children (as

they most certainly will before the third generation is fwept away,) is it not our business to prepare ourselves for them, to meditate on them, and to warn as many people as we can prudently, lest their blood should be required at our hands. were they to fall because of a surprise? Let us pray to God more frequently, that for the Elect's fake, he would still more shorten the days of the tribulation, and add daily to the True Church fuch as will be faved. But let us not forget to rejoice with Abraham, in feeing by faith, the glorious day of our Lord; and to hasten, by our fervent prayers, that glorious kingdom, those happy days, when the narrow shall be the way to destruction. when faints raised from the dead shall converse with living faints, and the world of spirits be manifested, in a great measure, to the material world: In a word, when Jefus will be All in All.

What a glorious prospect is this! let us then often think of these words of our Lord, "Behold, I come quickly, bleffed is he that mindeth the fayings of this prophecy." Let us join to "the Spirit and the Bride," who fay, " Come:" O let him that heareth fay, " Come, and let him that is athirst Come, for he that testifieth these things fays, Surely, I come quickly: Amen: Even fo come, Lord Jesus."

London, Nov. 29, 1755.

LETTERS OMITTED.

To the Rev. Mr. SELLON.

My dear Brother, Madeley, Oct. 7, 1769. Thank you for your letter and books, they came fafe to hand, and I shall give you the amount at the first opportunity. I have enquired R 3 what

what the Calvinists think of them, but I do not hear much about it. They chuse rather to be silent; a sign that they have not any great thing to object. Mr. R. looked at one here in my house, and objected to Edenow or ar edew. Rom. ix. 15. He says edew is, I have mercy, not, I should have mercy. I observed to Mr. Glascott, it is the subjunctive mood, and may take the sign should, would, or could, according to the analogy of faith.

is, that you would answer him in the cool manner you have the Synod, and my prayer to God is, that you may be assisted for that important work.

I know two strong Calvinist believers, who lately took their leave of this world with, "I shall be damned!" Oh what did all their professions of Perseverance do for them? They lest them in the lurch. May we have the power of God in our souls, and we shall readily leave unknown decrees to others.

The Lord give you patience with your Brethren.
The best way to confound them is, to preach that kingdom of God, which they cast away, with real righteousness and present peace and joy in believing: That is poison to the synodical kingdom.

I despair of seeing you, before I have seen Switzerland, which I design to visit next winter. Mr. Ireland, takes me as far as Lyons in my way.

There are some disputes in L. H. College; but when the power of God comes, they drop them. The Calvinists are three to one. Your book I are sent them as a hard nut for them to crack.

May the Lord spare you, and make you a free joyful soldier of the Lord Jesus; as tough against sin and unbelies, as you are against Calvin and the Synod. The Lord hath over-ruled your leaving S. for good. Let us trust him, and all will be well.

Farewell.

To the Right Hon. Lady MARY FITZGERALD.

Hon. and dear Lady, Madeley, July 20, 1785. XYE have received your kind letter, and mournfully acquiefced in the will of our heavenly Father, who by various infirmities and providences weans us from ourselves and our Friends, that we may be his without referve. It was, perhaps, a peculiar mercy that Providence blocked up your way to this place this Summer. A bad Putrid Fever carries off feveral people in these parts: Two of our neighbours died of it last week; and my wife, who had vifited them, was taken in so violent a manner, that I was obliged to offer her up to God in good earnest, as an oblation worthy a fon of Abraham. I hope the worst is over, but her weakness will long preach to me, as well as my own. Dying people,—we live in the midst of dying people. O let us live in fight of a dying, rifing Saviour, and the prospect of death will become first tolerable, and then joyous: Or if we weep, as our Lord, at the grave of our friends, or at the fide of their death-beds, we shall triumph in hope that all will be for the glory of God, and the good of our fouls.

I am, my dear Lady, &c. J. F.

To Messrs. Hare, Terry, Fox, and Good, at Hull;—and Messrs. Preston, Simpson, and Ramsden, at York.

My dear Brethren, London, Nov. 12, 1776.

Thank you for your kind letters and invitations to vifit you, and the brethren about you, should

the Lord raise me to any degree of my former strength. I have often found an attraction to my companions in tribulation in Yorkshire. My desire

was indeed a little felfish, I wanted to improve by the conversation of my unknown brethren. If God bids me be strong again out of weakness, I shall be glad to try if he will be pleased to comfort us by the mutual faith both of you and me. My defire is, that Christ may be glorified both in my life and death. I am glad you wish, that the power of godliness may flourish among the professors of the faith. If I have any desire to live at any time, God is my witness, that it is principally to be a witness in word and deed, of the dispensation of power from on high; and to point out that kingdom which does not confift in word, but in power, even in righteousness, peace, and joy by the Holy Ghoft, the Spirit of Power. I am writing an Effay upon that important part of the chriftian doctrine, and hope that it will be a mite in the treasury of truth, which the Lord has opened for the use of his people.

Should I be spared to visit you, the keep of a horse, and the poor rider, will be all the burden that I should lay on you; and that will be more than my heavenly Master indulged himself in. I am just setting out for Norwich with Mr. Wesley, whose renewed strength, and immense labours astonish me. What a pattern for preachers! His redeeming the time is, if I mistake not, match-

less.

Should I never have the pleasure of thanking you in person, for your brotherly regard, I beg you will all endeavour to meet me in the kingdom of our Father, where distance of time and place is lost in the sulness of him that is all in all. The way ye know,—the penitential way of an heart-felt Faith working by obedient Love. In that good, the narrow way, I trust you will help by your prayers and example,

My dear Brethren, your affectionate Brother, and willing Servant in Christ,

J. F.

To Mr. JOHN FENNEL.

"Dear John, Madeley, Nov. 28, 1784. Rejoice to hear that you think of a better world, and of the better part, which Mary and your late mother, another Mary, chose before you; may all her prayers, but above all, may the dew of heaven, come down upon your foul in folemn thoughts, heavenly defires, and strong refolutions to be the Lord's, cost what it will. Let the language of your heart and lips be, at any rate,-" I will be a follower of Christ;-yea, a member of his, a child of God,—and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven:" a noble promife this! and of which I have so peculiar a right to put you in mind. But in order to be this happy and holy foul, you must not forget that your christian name, your christian vows, and ten thousand reasons beside, bind you to turn your back upon the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to fet yourfelf stedfastly to look to Father, Son, and Holy Ghoft; to your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

My dear John, you have no time to lose: We have calls here to the young without end; they die fast. I lately buried two brothers and fisters in the fame grave. - Be you also ready !- I was fome nights ago, praying for you on my bed, in my sleepless hours, and I asked for you, the Faith of righteous Abel, the chaffity of Joseph, the early piety of Samuel, the right choice of young Solomon, the felf-denial, and abstinence of Daniel, together with the zeal and undaunted courage of his three friends. But above all, I asked, that you might follow John the Baptist, and John the Apostle, as they followed our Lord. Back earneftly, constantly, back my prayer. So shall you be faithful, diligent, and godly; a bleffing to all around you; and a comfort to your affectionate old I. F. Friend, and Minister,

Short Heads of Self-Examination.

1. DID I awake spiritual, and was I watchful in keeping my mind from wandering this morning when I was rising?

2. Have I this day got nearer to God in times of prayer; or have I given way to a lazy, idle

fpirit?

3. Has my faith been weakened by unwatchfulness, or quickened by diligence, this day?

4. Have I this day walked by faith, and eyed

God in all things?

- 5. Have I denied myself of all unkind words and thoughts? Have I delighted in seeing others preferred before me? And can I lay my hand upon my heart, and say,—
 - "That mercy I to others shew,

" That mercy shew to me."

6. Have I made the most of my precious time, fo far as I had light, strength, and opportunity?

7. Have I kept the issues of my heart in the

means of grace, fo as to profit by them?

8. What have I done this day for the fouls

and bodies of God's dear faints?

- 9. Have I laid out any thing to please myself, when I might have saved the money for the cause of God?
- day, remembering,—" that in the multitude of words, there wanteth not fin?"

11. In how many instances have I denied myself

this day?

Gospel of Jesus Christ?

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